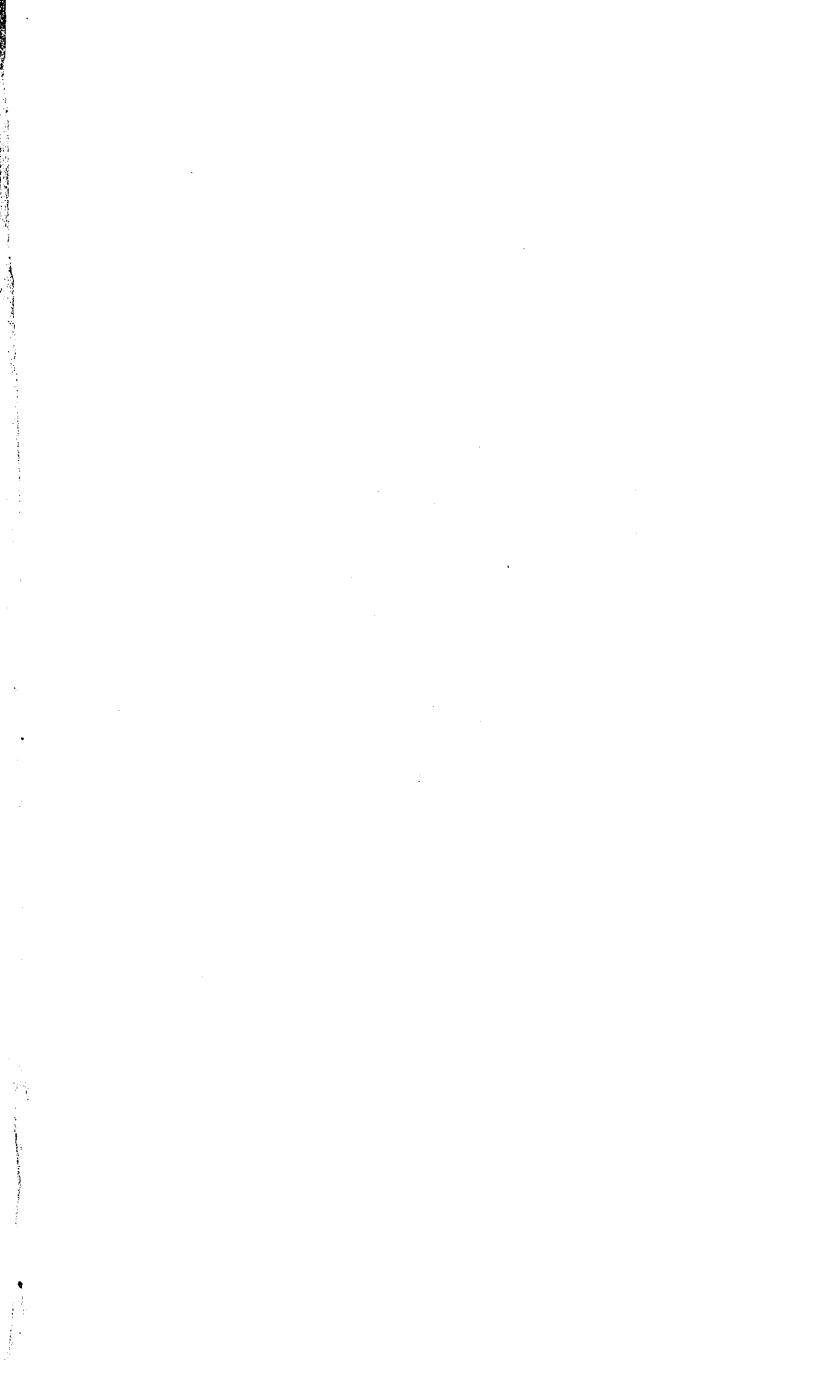
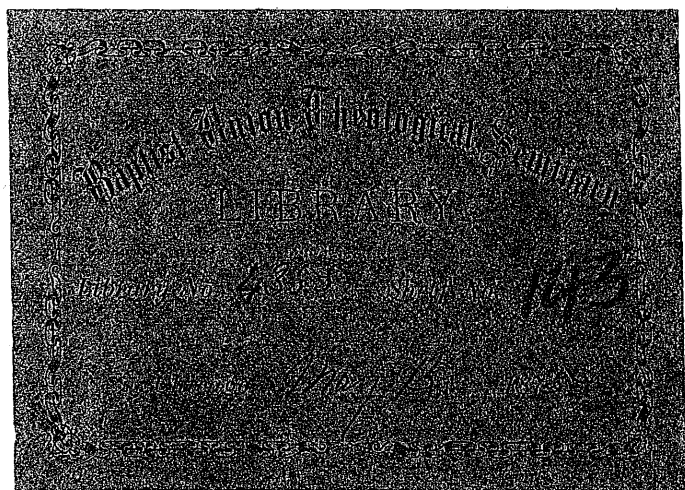


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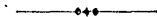
HELPS TO PRAYER:

A Manual,

DESIGNED TO AID CHRISTIAN BELIEVERS IN ACQUIRING
THE GIFT, AND IN MAINTAINING THE PRACTICE
AND SPIRIT OF

PRAYER

IN THE CLOSET, THE FAMILY, THE SOCIAL GATHERING,
AND THE PUBLIC CONGREGATION.



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PREFACE.

THE design of the present volume is as manifold, and yet as definite, as the suggestions of its title.

1. Prayer being a universal duty, it aims to encourage its practice by individuals of every class and circumstance in human life.

2. Prayer being an important and responsible duty, one of its objects is to aid those who ought to practice it in acquiring correct and adequate ideas of its nature, and also appropriate habits in its discharge.

3. Prayer being a constant duty, it offers suggestions and comments designed to make it increasingly attractive and edifying to the worshiper as he advances in life and experience.

4. In view of the general consciousness of sincere worshipers, that in this high and holy duty the mind often needs to be prompted

and the heart quickened by helps from without, these pages embrace material drawn from the best sources specially adapted to promote both those ends. Primarily and constantly referring worshipers to the teachings of Revelation concerning prayer and worship, they also illustrate the spirit and fruit of those teachings by choice extracts from writers whose hearts and pens have glowed with the fervor of true devotion. Thus, whether made the subject of occasional reference or of careful study, the volume is designed to serve as a Manual of Devotional Helps.

5. In view of the religious duty of training up children in the way they should go that when they are old they may not depart from it, this book offers helps to parents and teachers not only adapted to infantile capacities, but also in a progressive series extending through juvenile growth up to adult life.

6. As self-examination is an important element of true worship, suggestive questions to aid in its practice have been inserted from the pen of a master in Israel.

7. The family being God's ordinance, and one of the most important bulwarks of prac-

tical piety both in Churches and nations, an important design of this publication is to urge regular family worship, and to offer aid for its conduct, especially in circumstances in which it is in danger of being neglected, whether through constitutional diffidence, the embarrassments of commencing a religious life, or in the absence, sickness, or death of heads of families.

In this feature it seeks to occupy the golden mean between undue reliance on forms of prayer, and that prejudice which would reject them under all circumstances. In the limited number of prayers for families embodied at the end of the volume, the chief characteristics will be found to be directness, brevity, comprehensiveness, and a scriptural phraseology worthy of universal imitation. Hence it is believed that their frequent perusal, whether for personal edification or for devotional use, will be helpful toward the formation of desirable habits of extemporaneous prayer.

In the preparation of a volume contemplating such various and important objects, the compiler has often had before him the

imagery of the Prophet Ezekiel: "Thou wast upon the holy mountain of God; thou hast walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire." Ezek. xxviii, 14.

His labor will be well rewarded should the use of its contents lead himself and others to tread more lovingly that luminous pathway, and especially to acquire greater confidence and a more accepted "boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us." Heb. x, 19, 20.

CONTENTS.

CHAPTER I.

RIGHT VIEWS OF PRAYER.

1. The true idea of prayer.....	Page 13
2. Prayer prompted by a universal human instinct.....	18
3. Prayer a divine appointment.....	19
4. Prayer a sacred duty.....	20
5. Prayer a great privilege.....	21
6. The obligation of prayer universal.....	27
7. Prayer involves high responsibility on the part of worshipers...	27
8. Excellence in prayer an acquired gift.....	30
9. The hinderances to prevailing prayer should be removed or guarded against.....	37
10. Encouragements to prayer from God's word and provi- dence.....	45
11. The principal elements or parts of Christian worship should be considered separately.....	52
12. Examples of scriptural help for the various parts of prayer...	53
Invocation	53
Adoration.....	54
Confession.....	56
Petition and supplication.....	57
Promises and arguments.....	59
Thanksgiving and praise	62
13. Prayer should be considered in reference to its principal occasions.....	63

CHAPTER II.

HELPS TO PRIVATE PRAYER.

1. Consideration of the nature and special importance of private prayer.....	Page 65
2. An allotment of appropriate and regular seasons for private prayer.....	67
Morning worship.....	69
Evening worship.....	70
Noonday worship.....	70
3. Meditation.....	72
4. Self-examination.....	72
5. Devotional reading.....	74
6. Memorization of Scripture.....	75
7. Habits of mental and ejaculatory prayer.....	75
8. Ejaculatory utterances from the word of God classified for personal use.....	77
On awakening and arising in the morning.....	77
While washing and dressing.....	77
On going out.....	77
While engaged in business.....	78
In conversation.....	78
In difficult circumstances.....	78
In danger.....	79
In temptation.....	79
When ill-treated.....	79
Before reading the Scriptures.....	79
Before prayer.....	80
Going to church.....	80
On entering a place of worship.....	80
On hearing the Gospel.....	80
On retiring to rest.....	81
In the night watches.....	81
Occasional ejaculations.....	81
9. Prayer considered as a spiritual telegraph.....	80
10. The habit of devotional singing.....	83

CONTENTS.

9

- 11. The exercise and cultivation of all the Christian graces. Page 84
- 12. Children and youth should be taught habits of prayer from
their infancy..... 85

CHAPTER III.

HELPS TO FAMILY PRAYER.

- 1. Just views of the family institution..... 93
 - 1.) Its divine appointment..... 93
 - 2.) Mutual help and sympathy..... 93
 - 3.) Permanent advantage for the promotion of piety and
divine worship..... 94
 - 4.) Responsibility of the headship of families..... 96
- 2. Adequate views of parental obligation..... 99
- 3. Right views of social obligation..... 104
- 4. Fixed determination and consistent practice..... 110
- 5. A suitable allotment of time..... 111
- 6. Domestic reading and recitation of the word of God..... 112
- 7. A suitably varied order of subjects..... 115
 - Fourteen suggested topics..... 116
- 8. Devotional singing..... 118
- 9. Self-cultivation in reference to the appropriate conduct of
family worship..... 120
- 10. The occasional use of appropriate forms of prayer..... 121
- 11. The frequent use of the Lord's Prayer..... 122

CHAPTER IV.

HELPS TO SOCIAL PRAYER.

- 1. Attention to the scriptural warrant for social prayer..... 126
 - 1.) Its practice was contemplated in the instructions of
Christ to his disciples..... 127
 - 2.) It was practiced by the infant Church..... 128
 - 3.) It was practiced and enjoined by the apostles..... 129
- 2. Attention to the religious necessity and advantages of social
prayer..... 130
 - 1.) It is profitable as a means of developing the graces,
and strengthening the faith of believers..... 132

2.) It is advantageous in aiding others to come to the knowledge and experience of the truth.....	Page 132
3. A recognition of personal obligation to promote and maintain social worship.....	134
4. Personal preparation for the discharge of this duty.....	136
5. The right conduct of social worship.....	139

CHAPTER V.

HELPS TO PUBLIC WORSHIP.

A. GENERAL.....	142
Due consideration of the idea and ground of public worship.....	142
Its divine appointment.....	143
Its progressive development.....	143
The moral and spiritual instructions of the earlier dispensations	144
The duty and privilege of public prayer.....	145
The avoidance of erroneous views.....	146
The scriptural type of public prayer.....	148
B. FOR LEADERS OF PUBLIC WORSHIP.....	148
1. A thorough study of the subject of prayer as set forth in the word of God, and especially in the teachings of Christ and the apostles.....	149
2. Careful and persevering self-cultivation in reference to the spirit and gift of prayer.....	158
3. A careful avoidance of the faults of public prayer....	166
1.) The introduction of inappropriate matter.....	166
2.) Addresses to men.....	167
3.) Terms of familiarity or irreverence.....	167
4.) Repetitions	167
5.) Prolixity.....	167
6.) All forms of bad vocal utterance.....	167
4. Habits of adaptation to all varieties of subjects and circumstances	168

CONTENTS.

II.

5. That divine aid by which human infirmities are helped, and access secured to the source of blessings... Page	169
1.) From general scriptural promises of help.....	170
2.) In the preparation of the heart.....	170
3.) In wisdom and language.....	171
4.) By the Holy Ghost.....	172
5.) By the grace of access through Christ.....	172
6.) By faith.....	173
7.) By the prayers of the Church.....	174
C. FOR ATTENDING WORSHIPERS.....	175
1. Antecedent preparation.....	176
2. Personal interest.....	177
3. Actual participation.....	178
4. A maintained spirit of prayer in the house of God...	179
5. The divine benedictions.....	180
1.) The new birth.....	181
2.) Spiritual life.....	184
3.) The fruits and witness of the Holy Spirit.....	189
4.) The Holy Ghost as an indwelling comforter.....	186
5.) Divine light.....	190
6.) Heavenly love.....	191
7.) The earnest of eternal glory.....	193

FORMS OF PRAYER.

PRIVATE DEVOTION.

MORNING AND EVENING PRAYERS FOR LITTLE CHILDREN...	199
First series.....	199
Second series.....	199
Third series.....	201
Fourth series.....	202
PRAYERS FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH.....	203
Introductory address.....	203
Prayers for the several days of a week.....	204

QUESTIONS FOR SELF-EXAMINATION	Page 218
For any morning.....	218
For any evening	218
Relating to the love of God.....	219
Relating to the love of my neighbor.....	220
Relating to humility.....	220
Relating to self-denial.....	221
Relating to resignation and meekness.....	221
Relating to thankfulness.....	222
Relating to growth in grace.....	223
MORNING AND EVENING PRAYERS FOR ADULTS.....	224
Sunday morning to Saturday evening.....	224-251
A PRAYER OF SELF-DEDICATION.....	252
A MINISTER'S CLOSET PRAYER.....	254
" "	
FAMILY DEVOTION.	
PRAYERS FOR FAMILIES.....	259
First week.....	260
Second week.....	288
Third week.....	316
Fourth week.....	344
PRAYERS FOR PARTICULAR OCCASIONS.....	372
New Year's day, morning and evening.....	372
Easter day.....	376
Thanksgiving day.....	378
Christmas day.....	382
Communion Sunday	384
For a fast day.....	386
For a time of trial.....	388
For a time of sickness.....	390
On the death of a relative.....	392
On the commencement of a new minister's labors.....	394
For more laborers in the Lord's vineyard.....	395

HELPS TO PRAYER.

CHAPTER I.

RIGHT VIEWS OF PRAYER.

IN order to the performance of any duty, the first requisite is a correct idea of the nature of that duty. Random or unintelligent action cannot be expected to produce good results. We make too many mistakes after having secured the best knowledge we can. These principles are specially applicable to man's intercourse with the great God, his Maker. Hence, in proceeding to consider the subject of prayer as a practical Christian duty, it seems necessary, first, to give attention to the points involved in its essential nature. Properly comprehended these may severally be regarded as important helps to Christian devotion.

1. THE TRUE IDEA OF PRAYER.

The primary idea of prayer is asking, or request. This idea intensified is earnest and importunate request. Specially it is request preferred to a superior, as to a sovereign, or to a body of superiors, as to a legislature. In a religious sense, prayer is request addressed to a Divine being. In a Christian sense,

"prayer is the offering up of our desires unto God in the name of Christ." But the Christian significance of prayer is not limited to the idea of petition. It expands so as to involve the whole of man's intercourse with God. It includes "Our adoration of his perfections, our acknowledgment of the wisdom of his dispensations, our obligation for his benefits, providential and spiritual; the avowal of our entire dependence on him, our absolute subjection to him, the declaration of our faith in him, the expression of our devotedness to him; the confession of our own unworthiness, infirmities, and sins; petitions for the supply of our wants, as well as for the pardon of our offenses; for succor in our distress; for a blessing on our undertakings; for the direction of our conduct, and the success of our affairs."

In this enlarged sense prayer has been the subject of various forms of illustrative definitions, of which the following are striking examples:

"Prayer is the application of want to Him who alone can relieve it, the voice of sin to Him who alone can pardon it. It is the urgency of poverty, the prostration of humility, the fervency of penitence, the confidence of trust. It is not eloquence, but earnestness; not figures of speech, but compunction of soul. It is the 'Lord, save us, we perish,' of drowning Peter; the cry of faith to the ear of mercy.

"Prayer is desire; the abasement of contrition; the energy of gratitude. It is not a mere conception of the mind, nor an effort of the intellect, nor an act of the memory; but an elevation of the soul toward its Maker. It is the devout breathing of a creature

struck with a sense of its own misery, and of the infinite holiness of Him whom it is addressing, experimentally convinced of its own emptiness, and of the abundant fullness of God, of his readiness to hear, of his power to help, of his willingness to save. It is not an emotion produced in the senses, nor an effect wrought by the imagination; but a determination of the will, an effusion of the heart.

"Prayer is the guide to self-knowledge, by prompting us to look after our sins, in order to pray against them; it is a motive to vigilance, by teaching us to guard against those sins which, through self-examination, we have been enabled to detect.

"Prayer is an act both of the understanding and of the heart. The understanding must apply itself to the knowledge of the divine perfections, or the heart will not be led to the adoration of them. It would not be a *reasonable* service if the mind was excluded. It must be rational worship, or the human worshiper would not bring to the service the distinguishing faculty of his nature, which is reason. It must be spiritual worship, or it would want the distinctive quality to make it acceptable to Him who is a spirit, and who has declared that he will be worshiped 'in spirit and in truth.'"

"Prayer is the strong but secret chain which unites time with eternity, earth with heaven, man with God."

"Genuine prayer is the homage of the soul to God, and not an expedient to pacify him."

"Prayer draws all the Christian graces into its focus. It draws charity, followed by her lovely train,

her forbearance with faults, her forgiveness of injuries, her pity for errors, her compassion for want. It draws repentance, with her holy sorrows, her pious resolutions, her self-distrust. It attracts faith, with her elevated eye; hope, with her grasped anchor; beneficence, with her open hand; zeal, looking far and wide to serve; humility, with introverted eye, looking at home. Prayer, by quickening these graces in the heart, warms them into life, fits them for service, and dismisses each to its appropriate practice. Prayer is mental virtue; virtue is spiritual action. The mold into which genuine prayer casts the soul is not effaced by the suspension of the act, but retains some touches of the impression till the act is repeated."—*Hannah More*.

"Prayer is not mere speech, it is not the language of the lips. It is an emotion of the heart, a pouring out of the soul. Prayer implies a sense of want, and an ardent, importunate desire to have that want supplied. It is the unbosoming of our hearts unto Him who looketh at the heart, and requireth truth in the inward parts. It is the expression of our desires and wants unto him, and asking at his hands the blessings we need."—*Treffry*.

"When a holy soul comes before God, he has much more to say than merely to beg. He tells his God what a sense he has of the divine attributes; and what high esteem he pays to his majesty, his wisdom, his power, and his mercy. He talks with him about the works of creation, and stands wrapt up in wonder. He talks about the grace and mystery of redemption, and is yet more filled with admiration and joy. He

talks of all the affairs of nature, grace, and glory. He speaks of his works of providence, of love, and vengeance, in this and the future world. Infinite and glorious are the subjects of his holy communion between God and his saints."—*Watts*.

"Prayer is a living heart that speaks in a living ear, the ear of the living God."

"In prayer you do not address a general law or a first principle, but a living person. You do not commune with eternity, or with infinite space, but you commune with the Father of eternity; with Him 'who fills the highest heavens, and who also dwells in the lowliest hearts.' You do not hold converse with abstract goodness, but with the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ; with God in Christ; with him whose express image Jesus is; with Jesus himself; with your Friend within the veil; with your Father who is in heaven.

"Prayer is recourse to the ever-present and all-sufficient God. It is frailty fleeing to Omnipotence. It is misery at the door of mercy. It is worm Jacob at the ladder's foot, and that ladder's top in heaven. It is the dying thief beside a dying Saviour, and the same Paradise already open for them both. The mercy-seat is the ark of the covenant opened, and the legend over it, 'Ask, and it shall be given thee.' And prayer is the exploring eye and the believing hand selecting from the 'unsearchable riches of Christ' the sweetest mercies and the costliest gifts."—*Hamilton*.

"Prayer is a closing of the eyes on things seen, and opening them on things unseen. It is penitence

vocal, faith making its profession, and love kindling into a flame. It is a heart brought to the altar, a flower opening to the benignant eye of heaven; it is a putting off the shoes at Horeb; it is a walk to Emmaus; it is to be present in the upper chamber; to sit quietly by the Saviour's side, lean the head on his bosom, and feel the beating of Immanuel's heart."—*Thompson.*

2. PRAYER IS PROMPTED BY A UNIVERSAL HUMAN INSTINCT.

Man is a creature of want. From earliest infancy to extreme age there is no moment or circumstance in which a human being is not dependent on the Author of his existence for the supply of essential necessities—"for life and breath and all things." Coupled with this condition of want is a universal instinct of desire, and a corresponding power of expressing want, first by cries of helplessness, afterward by articulate language. Though for the supply of our physical necessities, such as "our daily bread," and relief from the pains of sickness, we employ the labor of our hands and auxiliary human aid, and although many never look beyond such intermediate agencies, yet it is easy to perceive that even these are gifts divine. "In agony, nature is no atheist. The soul is drawn to God by a sort of natural impulse, not always, perhaps, by an emotion of piety, but from a feeling conviction that every other refuge is a refuge of lies." So in that great class of human wants which rise superior to the physical and earthly, the soul feels an instinctive prompting to apply to some power

higher than human for relief. This prompting may be called the instinct of prayer. It has prevailed in every land and in every age. It has been recognized in all religions, and yet in false religions it has been fearfully perverted, while in irreligion it is wickedly repressed.

“Prayer is an act which seems to be so prepared in the frame of our nature, to be so congenial to our dependent condition, so suited to our exigencies, so adapted to every man’s known wants and to his possibilities of wants unknown, so full of relief to the soul, and of peace to the mind, and of gladness to the heart; so productive of confidence in God, and so reciprocally proceeding from that confidence, that we should think, if we did not know the contrary, that it is a duty which scarcely required to be enjoined.; that he who had once found out his necessities, and that there was no other redress for them, would spontaneously have recourse, as a delight, to what he had neglected as a command; that he who had once tasted the bounties of God, would think it a hardship not to be allowed to thank him for them; that the invitation to pray to his Benefactor was an additional proof of divine goodness; that to be allowed to praise him for his mercies was itself a mercy.”—*Hannah More.*

3. PRAYER IS A DIVINE APPOINTMENT.

It is an important office of all true religion to confirm, enlighten, and guide the human instinct of prayer. Hence in Revelation we are commanded to pray. We are also taught in reference to the

character and attributes of the Being to whom prayer should be addressed, as well as the manner in which we should approach him, and the objects for which we should pray. Indeed, from that early record in Genesis in which it is said; "Then began men to call upon the name of the Lord," (Gen. iv,) instructions concerning prayer, sometimes by precept and sometimes by example, may be traced down through the sacred volume to the moment when the beloved disciple closed up the canon of Revelation with the prayer, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus." Rev. xxii, 21.

4. PRAYER IS A SACRED DUTY.

While some persons may be disposed to follow their own higher promptings and all clear indications of the divine will, others refrain or hesitate until shown that prayer is required by specific divine commands. As if to remove doubt or excuse from all, such commands are numerous in the Scriptures. A few are subjoined to show that prayer to God is not optional with man, but an enjoined duty for which he will be held to account in the final day.

Seek the Lord and his strength, seek his face continually. I Chron. xvi, 11.

Seek the Lord and his strength, seek his face evermore. Psal. cv, 4.

Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near. Isa. lv, 6.

Take with you words, and turn to the Lord: say unto him, Take away all iniquity, and receive us graciously. Hosea xiv, 2.

Watch ye and pray, lest ye enter into temptation.
Mark xiv, 38.

Watch ye therefore, and pray always. Luke xxi, 36.

In every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. Phil. iv, 6.

Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving. Col. iv, 2.

I will therefore that men pray every-where, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting. 1 Tim. ii, 8.

5. PRAYER IS A GREAT PRIVILEGE.

Although an indispensable duty, prayer is none the less a great and peculiar privilege. To many minds it is most agreeable, and to all it may be profitable to contemplate the subject in this light.

“Let us make a supposition. Suppose that the individual on this earth who combines in himself the greatest wisdom and goodness were accessible to you. Suppose that when any thing pressed upon you—a difficulty from which your own sagacity could not extricate you, or an undertaking which your own resources could not compass—you had only to send him a statement of the case, and were sure, in good time, to get his best and kindest counsel—would not you deem this a great *privilege*? Would not something of this sort just meet the case of many? One is entering on a new course of occupation, and in its very outset meets with problems that fairly baffle him, but which a friend of a little more experience or perspicacity could instantly solve. Another is over-

taken by a sea of troubles—a concourse of trials which quite overwhelm him, but through which he perfectly believes that a stronger arm or a more buoyant spirit could carry him. But where shall he look for that wiser friend—that stronger arm? Further, suppose that instead of any wise or influential personage on earth, or any glorified spirit in Paradise, it was possible for you to secure the ear and engage the help of one of the principalities or powers in the heavenly places; some being of such bright intelligence, that he can smile at all our wisdom, and such commanding might, that he can do in a moment what would occupy our race for a millennium; could you for an instant bespeak his attention, and gain assurance of his willingness to help; would you not feel that your object was unspeakably promoted, or your burden amazingly lightened? To have enlisted such ability and skill upon your side—the few minutes spent in securing such superhuman help—would you not feel that they were a larger contribution toward eventual success than a life-time of your personal efforts? But rise a step higher—an infinite step!—and suppose it were possible to arrest the ear and secure the help of God himself; suppose that you could, by any possibility, gain the attention of the living God—that you could secure not the cold and distant on-looking, but the interested regard and the omnipotent interposition of Jehovah himself—would not this be a privilege? But this is precisely what prayer is. Some have no friend of extraordinary sagacity or power to go to. The spirits of the departed cannot come to us; and neither to them nor to

angels are we warranted to pray. And even though we could evoke a Samuel from the sepulcher, or bring down Gabriel from above the sky—the blessings which are most needful for us are such as neither Samuel nor Gabriel can give—blessings of which the treasure lies within the light inaccessible, and of which Omnipotence alone preserves the key. That Almighty hand prayer moves. That incommunicable key prayer turns. That unapproachable treasury prayer opens. The blessings which Solomon in all his glory, and Abraham in the bosom of his God, and the seraphs who overshadow the throne—the blessings which these have not to give, it is the privilege of prayer to procure.

“But set it in another light. Imagine that there had been certain limitations on prayer. Imagine that there had only been one spot on the earth from which prayer could arise with acceptance. Imagine—by no means inconceivable, for there was once something very like it—imagine that the Lord had selected some little spot of earth—a Mount Zion or a Holy Land—and said that here, and here only, was the place to worship. Imagine that from this hallowed spot alone there had existed a passage into heaven for the prayers of earth, and that all supplications, however earnest, uttered on the profane soil of the common globe, had gone for nothing. What a resorting we should have seen to this place of only prevalency! When there occurred some conjuncture decisive of weal or woe to an individual or a family, or when a man became so anxious about his soul’s salvation that nothing could content him save light

from above, we should have seen the busy trader arranging for his protracted absence, and the cautious, untraveled husbandman preparing for the perilous pilgrimage, and multitudes, on their own behalf or on behalf of others, resorting to the place where prayer is heard and answered. And imagine, further, that there had just been one day in the year when prayer was permitted; that those who arrived at the appointed place too late, found the gate of access closed for the next twelve months, and, however sudden the emergency, and however extreme its exigency, that it was impossible to do any thing for it till the weary year moved round, and brought back the one propitious day? even thus restricted, would not prayer have been felt to be a privilege worth a pilgrimage and worth a long on-waiting? Just fancy that in our earth's yearly revolution round the sun there was disclosed a crevice in the sky; that on one night in the year, and on one mountain top, there was a vista opened through the encircling vault, and a sight of dazzling glories revealed to all who gazed from the favored summit; and fancy that through the brilliant gap there fell a shower of gold and gems, and that this recurred regularly on the self-same evening every year, what a concourse to that Pisgah might you count upon! How many eager eyes would strain the breathless hour beforehand till the first streak of radiance betokened the bursting glory! And how many emulous hands would rush together to catch the flaming rubies and the diamond-rain!

“And just conceive that certain costly or arduous preliminaries were essential to successful prayer;

suppose that a day's strict abstinence, or some painful self-punishment, were exacted: or that each worshiper were required to bring in his hand some costly offering—the choicest of his flock, or a large per centage on his income—and who would say that this was unreasonable? Would not access into God's own presence—a favor so ineffable—would it not be wisely purchased at any price, and might not sinful “dust and ashes” marvel that after any ordeal or purifying process it was admitted near such Majesty?

“But how stands the case? Prayer is not a consultation with the highest wisdom which this world can supply. It is not intercourse with an angel or a spirit made perfect. But it is an approach to the living God. It is access to the High and Holy One who inhabiteth eternity. It is detailing in the ear of divine sympathy every sorrow. It is consulting with divine wisdom on every difficulty. It is asking from divine resources the supply of every want. And this not once in a life-time, or for a few moments on a stated day of each year, but at any moment, at every time of need. Whatever be the day of your distress, it is a day when prayer is allowable. Whatever be the time of your calamity, it is a time when prayer is available. However early in the morning you seek the gate of access, you find it already open; and however deep the midnight moment when you find yourself in the sudden arms of death, the winged prayer can bring an instant Saviour near. And this wheresoever you are. It needs not that you ascend some special Pisgah or Moriah. It needs not that

you should enter some awful shrine, or put off your shoes on some holy ground. Could a memento be reared on every spot from which an acceptable prayer had passed away, and on which a prompt answer has come down, we should find *Jehovah-shammah*—"the Lord hath been here"—inscribed on many a cottage hearth and many a dungeon floor. We should find it not only in Jerusalem's proud temple and David's cedar galleries, but in the fisherman's cottage by the brink of Gennesaret, and in the upper chamber where Pentecost began. And whether it be the field where Isaac went to meditate, or the rocky knoll where Jacob lay down to sleep, or the brook where Israel wrestled, or the den where Daniel gazed on the hungry lions and the lions gazed on him, or the hill-sides where the Man of sorrows prayed all night, we should still discern the prints of the ladder's feet let down from heaven—the landing-place of mercies because the starting-point of prayers. And all this whatsoever you are. It needs no saint, no proficient in piety, no adept in eloquent language, no dignitary of earthly rank. It needs but a simple Hannah, or a lisping Samuel. It needs but a blind beggar, or a loathsome leper. It needs but a penitent publican, or a dying thief. And it needs no sharp ordeal, no costly passport, no painful expiation, to bring you to the mercy-seat; or rather, I should say, it needs the costliest of all; but the blood of atonement—the Saviour's merit—the name of Jesus—priceless as they are, cost the sinner nothing. They are freely put at his disposal, and instantly and constantly he may use them. This access to God in every place, at every

moment, without any price or any personal merit, is it not a privilege?"—*Hamilton*.

6. THE OBLIGATION OF PRAYER IS UNIVERSAL.

Obligation is the usual complement of privilege. As, therefore, the privileges portrayed above are freely offered to all, so the obligation rests upon all to improve them. As "prayer is the simplest form of speech that infant lips can try," so it is a duty which childhood can learn to appreciate and practice while on the very borders of infancy itself. With increasing years, youth can develop the same obligation into fixed and regular habits of life; while mature manhood and hoary age are held to the practice of prayer as a condition of their purest joys, and a necessity of their highest well-being.

Specially on Christians does the duty of prayer rest as a constant obligation.

"Long as they live should Christians pray;
They learn to pray when first they live."

All who love the Lord Jesus Christ must show their love by keeping his commandments, which include the injunction, *Men ought always to pray, and not to faint*. Luke xviii, 1.

7. PRAYER INVOLVES HIGH RESPONSIBILITY ON THE PART OF WORSHIPERS.

Even if prayer were only a ceremony, a consideration of the holiness and exaltation of the Being to whom it is addressed would show that it ought to be performed in a reverent and worthy manner. God is

not to be mocked, neither is his name to be taken in vain or triflingly. Worship, indeed, has its ceremonies, such as appropriate postures of the body and right forms of words, but its essential qualities must ever be found in the heart. Postures may be assumed mechanically, and words may be repeated without thought or feeling; hence they are only of value when used to express corresponding sentiments or desires. But sincerity of heart admits of neither counterfeit nor affectation. It must be real in the sight of God or it cannot exist, however its semblances may fill the eyes of men. At this very point where it is not difficult to deceive our fellow-men, it is very easy to deceive ourselves. To warn us of this danger, and to aid us in avoiding it, the holy Scriptures utter terrible rebukes against the counterfeits, the semblances, and the mistakes of worship. Not only do they teach that "lying lips are abomination to the Lord," but that "unclean lips," even though belonging to a prophet, need to be touched with a purifying flame from the altar of the Lord.

Surely God will not hear vanity, neither will the Almighty regard it. Job xxxv, 13.

If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me. Psa. lxvi, 18.

The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord. Prov. xv, 8.

Keep thy foot when thou goest to the house of God, and be more ready to hear, than to give the sacrifice of fools: for they consider not that they do evil. Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thine heart be hasty to utter any thing before God: for God is in

heaven, and thou upon earth: therefore let thy words be few. Ecc. v, 1, 2.

To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me? saith the Lord: . . . Bring no more vain oblations. . . . When ye spread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you; yea, when ye make many prayers, I will not hear: your hands are full of blood. Isa. i, 11, 13, 15.

Ye say, *Wherein have we despised thy name?* Ye offer polluted bread upon mine altar; and ye say, *Wherein have we polluted thee?* . . . If ye offer the blind for sacrifice, is it not evil? and if ye offer the lame and sick, is it not evil? . . . Cursed be the deceiver, which hath in his flock a male, (or a perfect animal for an offering,) and voweth, and sacrificeth unto the Lord a corrupt thing: for I am a great King, saith the Lord of hosts. Mal. i, 6-8, 14.

When ye pray, use not vain repetition, as the heathen do. Matt. vi, 7.

Ye hypocrites, well did Esaias prophesy of you, saying, *This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoreth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me.* Matt. xv, 7, 8.

Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss. James iv, 3.

By these and other similar passages of holy Scripture should Christians be admonished not only against insincerity, but also against vanity and emptiness of mind, when they attempt to worship. If the worship which God accepts consists only in the sacrifices and offerings of the heart, all well-meaning worshipers should see to it that their hearts are furnished with

what they may appropriately offer before the Lord. No one can offer that which he does not possess. Hence, he who would offer to the Lord an offering in righteousness should humble himself beneath the mighty hand of God, that he may in every act of worship bring to his heavenly Father a broken heart and a contrite spirit, sacrifices which God will not despise.

In order to spiritual and acceptable worship, "that the soul be without knowledge, it is not good." Specially do we need a thorough knowledge of our own wants of every description, as well as of the power and willingness of God to relieve them. But this cannot be had without a careful study of ourselves, our relations in life, our actions, and our motives in the light of scriptural truth. Such a study should be habitual, and accompanied with earnest prayer for divine instruction. "Lord, teach us to pray," should be the constant supplication of every true disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ.

In the light of these considerations, how fearful is the responsibility of those who, whether neglecting prayer or performing its outward routine, nevertheless neither give time, nor thought, nor study, to the preparation of their hearts and minds for suitably waiting upon the Lord.

8. EXCELLENCE IN PRAYER IS AN ACQUIRED GIFT.

In all divine things man is necessarily a learner. Although the cries of infancy are spontaneous, and although God will not reject the plea of sincere penitence when expressed in the most broken lan-

guage, or in the poorest jargon of ignorance itself, yet any just conception of either the responsibility or the sacredness of worship, would lead every right-minded worshiper to wish to order his speech and his cause in the best possible manner before the Lord. Not only so, but as a means both of glorifying God, and of growing in grace and knowledge himself, as well as of contributing to the edification of others, every true Christian should seek, if possible, to enter upon such a course of improvement as will enable him to attain increasing excellence and power in prayer as life progresses.

"Covet earnestly the best gifts," is an inspired precept of the Apostle Paul. And what gift can be better or of higher importance than the gift of prayer? Even the gift of teaching or of preaching relates to no higher interests and is of less frequent use. Although preaching is designed for the whole world, and those who are called should go every-where preaching the word, yet they are not commanded to preach always. The Christian rule, however, respecting prayer is, "Pray without ceasing. In every thing give thanks." Preaching may be required every Sabbath, and sometimes every day of the week, but prayer is necessary many times every day, not for ministers alone, but for all Christians.

"The gift of prayer may be thus described :

"It is an ability to suit our thoughts to all the various parts and designs of this duty, and a readiness to express those thoughts before God in the fittest manner to profit our own souls, and the souls of others that join with us.

“This holy skill of speaking to God in prayer is called a *gift*, partly because it was bestowed on the apostles and primitive Christians in an immediate and extraordinary manner by the Spirit of God, and partly because the ordinary assistance of the Spirit of God is required to the attainment of this holy skill or ability to pray.

“The gift of prayer is one of the noblest and most useful in the Christian life, and therefore to be sought with earnest desire and diligence; and in order to attain it we must avoid these two extremes:

“I. A confining ourselves entirely to precomposed forms of prayer.

“II. An entire dependence on sudden motions and suggestions of thought.

“I. The first extreme to be avoided is, a confining ourselves to set precomposed forms of prayer.

“I grant it lawful and convenient for weaker Christians to use a form in prayer, rather than not perform that duty at all. Christ himself seems to have indulged it to his disciples in their infant state of Christianity. (Luke xi, 1, 2, etc.) I grant also that sometimes the most improved saints may find their own wants and desires, and the frames of their own hearts, so happily expressed in the words of other men that they cannot find better, and may therefore in a very pious manner use the same, especially when they labor under a present deadness of spirit, and great indisposition for the duty. It is also evident that many assistances may be borrowed by younger and elder Christians from forms of prayer well composed, without the use of the whole form as a prayer. In

the language of a judicious author, I would say. 'That forms may be useful, and in some cases necessary. For,

"1. Some, even among Christians and professors, are so rude and ignorant that they cannot tolerably express their desires in prayer.

"2. Some again, though they can do it privately, so far as may suffice in their secret addresses to God ; yet when they are to pray before others, want either dexterity and fitness of expression, readiness of utterance, or confidence to use those abilities they have.

"3. It is possible that some bodily distemper, or sudden distraction, may befall such as are otherwise able, which may becloud their minds, weaken their memories, and dull their parts.'

"Now though the use of forms in such cases be not unlawful, yet a perpetual confinement to them will be attended with such inconveniences as these :

"1. It much hinders the free exercise of our own thoughts and desires, which is the chief work and business of prayer, (namely,) to express our desires to God : and whereas our thoughts and affections should direct our words, a set form of words directs our thoughts and affections ; and while we bind ourselves to those words only, we damp our inward devotion, and prevent the holy fire from kindling within us ; we discourage our active powers and passions from running out on divine subjects, and check the breathings of our souls heavenward.

"2. The thoughts and affections of the heart that are truly pious and sincere are wrought in us by the Spirit of God, and if we deny them utterance because

they are not found in prayer-books, we run the danger of resisting the Holy Ghost, quenching the Holy Spirit.

“3. A confinement to forms cramps and imprisons those powers that God hath given us for improvement and use ; it silences our natural abilities, and forbids them to act ; and it puts a bar upon our spiritual faculties, and prevents their growth. To satisfy ourselves with mere forms, to confine ourselves wholly to them, and neglect to stir up and improve our own gifts, is one kind of spiritual sloth, and highly to be disapproved.

“4. It leads us into the danger of hypocrisy and mere lip service. Sometimes we shall be tempted to use words that are not suited to our present wants, or sorrows, or circumstances, because those words are made ready beforehand.

“5. The confinement of ourselves to a form, though it is not always attended with formality and indifference, yet it is very apt to make our spirits cold and flat, formal and indifferent in our devotion. In our daily repetition of a form, we neglect due attention to the full sense of the words. But there is something more suited to awaken the attention of the mind in a conceived prayer. When a Christian is making his own way toward God according to the present inclination of his soul and urgency of his present wants, and ‘while we are clothing the sense of our hearts in fit expressions, it must needs keep the heart closer at work.’

“6. The duty of prayer is very useful to discover to us the frame of our own spirits ; but a constant use

of forms will much hinder our knowledge of ourselves, and prevent our acquaintance with our own hearts, which is one great spring of maintaining inward religion in the power of it. As, therefore, an inward search of our souls, and intimate acquaintance with ourselves, is a means to obtain the gift of prayer, so the exercise of the gift of prayer will promote this self-acquaintance, which is discouraged and hindered by the restraint of forms.

“In the last place I mention the most usual and convincing argument against perpetual confinement to a form, and that is, because it renders our converse with God very imperfect; for it is not possible that forms of prayer should be composed that are perfectly suited to all our frames of spirit, and fitted to all our occasions in the things of this life and the life to come. Our circumstances are always altering, in this frail and mutable state. We have new sins to be confessed, new temptations and sorrows to be represented, new wants to be supplied. Every change of Providence in the affairs of a nation, a family, or a person, requires suitable petitions and acknowledgments. And all these can never be well provided for in any prescribed composition. I confess all our concerns of soul and body may be included in some large and general words of a form, which is no more suited to one time, or place, or condition, than to another. But generals are cold and do not affect us, nor affect persons that join with us, and whose case he that speaks in prayer should represent before God. It is much sweeter to our own souls, and to our fellow-worshippers, to have our

fears and doubts and complaints and temptations and sorrows represented in most exact and particular expressions, in such language as the soul itself feels when the words are spoken.

“II. Another extreme to be avoided by all that would obtain the gift of prayer is, a neglect of preparation for prayer, and an entire dependence on sudden motions and suggestions ; as though we were to expect the perpetual impression of the Holy Spirit upon our minds, as the apostles and inspired saints ; as though we had reason to hope for his continual impulses, both in the matter and manner and words of prayer, without any forethought, or care, or premeditation of our own. 'Tis true, indeed, that when a man hath premeditated the matter of his prayer, and the method of it, never so exactly, he ought not so to confine himself as to neglect or check any warm and pious desires that may arise in his heart in the midst of the duty. But this doth not hinder, but that it is lawful and proper by all useful means, to endeavor in general to learn the holy skill of praying, and to prepare also, by meditation, or reading, or holy conversation, for the particular exercise of this gift, and the performance of this duty.”—*Abridged from Watts.*

The suggestions quoted above, although as relevant now as in former generations, nevertheless being negative in form, require to be supplemented by such positive advices as the following :

1.) Set a high estimate upon the gift of prayer as a grace attainable by yourself in common with other Christians.

2.) Consider the important bearing which your attainment of it may have, not only upon the highest welfare of your own souls, but also upon the salvation of others, and the prosperity of the Church of God.

3.) Consider that your attainment of this gift will be proportioned to the earnestness, the intelligence, and the perseverance with which you seek it.

4.) Study the word of God with reference to this especial end.

5.) Let your entreaty be like that of the disciples to Christ, "Lord, teach us to pray."

6.) Implore the aid of the Holy Spirit to help your infirmities.

7.) Cultivate the gift of prayer by continual practice.

8.) Make a diligent use of appropriate human helps, such as premeditation, clear perceptions of the spiritual necessities of yourself and others, facility in the use of scriptural language and other auxiliaries of devotion pointed out in the present volume.

9. THE HINDERANCES TO PREVAILING PRAYER
SHOULD BE REMOVED OR GUARDED AGAINST.

They are numerous. Some of them arise from actual sin, some from Satanic temptation, and some from human weakness and wrong habits. Hindrances of the first class are obvious in their character, and if cherished are fatal in their result. Such are religious unconcern, worldly-mindedness, absorption in temporal cares, and guilt upon the conscience. The following portraiture of the latter will sufficiently set forth the nature of whatever is kindred to it.

“When sin is recent—when, like Adam skulking among the trees, the bitter-sweet of the forbidden fruit is still present to his taste, and his newly-opened eyes are aghast at his own deformity—it is not natural for the self-condemned transgressor to draw near to God. And it is not till the Spirit of God directs his view to the unnoticed sacrifice, and encourages him to put on the robe of God’s providing, that the abashed and trembling criminal can venture back into God’s presence. And it is not till the Spirit of God comes forth into his soul, and begins to cry ‘Abba’ there, that the soul goes forth with alacrity to meet a reconciled God. To reveal the great High Priest, the daysman between Infinite Holiness and human vileness—to open heaven and display Jesus standing at the right hand of God—to impart confidence in the finished work, and so, amid abounding guilt, to give hope to prayer—is His work who, when he is come, convinces not only of sin, but of righteousness.” John xvi, 8.—*Hamilton*.

While the carnal heart, which is enmity against God, shrinks from a near approach to him who is justly displeased with sin, on the other hand true penitence flies to God for refuge and for pardon. But even in this act it is not certain to be free from the temptations of the adversary, sometimes prompting to presumption and sometimes to despair. Even when a soul has taken refuge in Christ, temptations follow him and are often most violent in reference to the essential duty of prayer. In all such cases it is necessary, in accordance with divine instruction, to resist the devil that he may flee from us; or, if his

attacks be renewed, to be able to quench his fiery darts by the shield of faith.

But even the established Christian life is not free from hinderances to prayer, against which we need to watch and strive. One of these is a sluggish, inactive state of mind, an indisposition to rouse one's self "to lay hold on eternal life."

Mental indolence tends to spiritual poverty and devotional barrenness. Prayer is not a mere exercise of the mind, yet activity of mind is essential to the proper meditation or utterance of prayer. Devotion in all its forms is greatly quickened by those moral considerations which cause a suppliant to feel the extremity of his wants, as well as the solemnity of an address to the Creator and Judge of men. Such considerations are usually very powerful with all persons at the commencement of an earnest religious life. But the tendency of repetition of even the most sacred duties is to wear off the keen edge of attention, and induce a familiar and ceremonious routine. It is against this tendency to dullness and spiritual languor that a Christian has to contend as a means of keeping himself in a proper frame and spirit of devotion.

"True, there may be hours when the mind is alert, from other causes ; when the fountains of the soul are unsealed by a great sorrow, or a great deliverance ; when *before* we called, God has heard us, and the Spirit now helps our infirmities, so that thought is nimble, sensibility is fluent, and the mouth speaketh out of the abundance of the heart. Yet such unforeseen and gratuitous aids to mental elasticity,

are not the *law* of devotional life. In this, as in other things, no great blessing is given thoughtlessly, and none can be received thus. The law of blessing allies it in some sort with struggles of our own.

“God’s condescension is nowhere more conspicuous than in his hearing of prayer. No ponderous intellectual machinery is needful to its dignity; no loftiness of reasoning, no magnificence of imagery, no polish of diction; no learning, no art, no genius. Bruised reeds, smoking flax, broken hearts, dumb sufferers, the slow of speech, timid believers, tempted spirits—weakness in all its varieties—find a refuge in that thought of God, which nothing else reveals so affectingly as the gift of prayer, that he is a very *present* help in every time of trouble. He whom the heaven of heavens cannot contain ‘has come down and placed himself in the center of the little circle of human ideas and affections,’ as if for the purpose of making our ‘religion always the homestead of common feelings.’

“All this is true, and no idea of the intellectuality of prayer should be entertained which conflicts with this. But we degrade the dignity of God’s condescension, if we abuse his indulgence of our weakness to an encouragement of our indolence.

“The truth is, that an indulgence of sluggishness of mind is sometimes the secret sin of good men. It is the iniquity which they regard in their hearts, and because of which God will not hear them. Mental ease is a refined and seductive idol, which often beguiles men who have too much Christian principle,

or too much delicacy of nature, or too much prudence of self-control, or it may be too much pride of character, to fall into a physical vice.

“When good men are ensnared in this sleek idolatry, before the decline of old age, or the infirmities of disease render rest a necessity, God often breaks in upon it with the blows of his hard hand. He fights against it ‘with battles of shaking;’ and in part with the design of recalling his mistaken friends into closer communion with himself. He thwarts their plans of life. He sends troubles to plague them. He knocks out from under them the props of their comfort. He does this, in part, for the sake of startling their torpid minds, and thus reaching their stagnant hearts, by giving them something to think of, which they feel they *must* make the subject of living, agonizing prayer.

“Coleridge said he thought the act of praying to be, in its most perfect form, the very highest *energy* of which the human heart was capable. The large majority of worldly men, and of learned men, he pronounced incapable of executing his ideal of prayer.

“Many scriptural representations of the idea of devotion come up fully to this mark. The prayer of a righteous man, that availeth much, which our English Bible so infelicitously describes as ‘effectual, fervent,’ is in the original an ‘*energetic*’ prayer, a ‘*working*’ prayer. Some conception of the inspired thought in the epithet may be derived from the fact, that the same word is elsewhere used to intensify the description of the power of the Holy Spirit in a renewed heart. Thus: ‘According to the power that

worketh in 'us,'—the power that *energizes* us in a holy life—such is the inspired idea of a good man's prayer.

"What else is the force of the frequent conjunction of 'watching' and 'praying' in the scriptural style of exhortation to the duties of the closet? Thus: 'Watch *and* pray,' 'watch *unto* prayer,' 'praying always *and* watching,' 'continue in prayer *and* watch:' there is no mental lassitude, no self-indulgence here. It was a lament of the prophet over the degeneracy of God's people: 'None *stirreth himself up* to take hold of Thee.' Paul exhorts the Romans to '*strive* together with him in their prayers,' and commends an ancient preacher to the confidence of the Colossians, as one who '*labored fervently* in prayers.' There is no droning or drawling effort here."—*Phelps*.

Closely connected with the hinderance above-named is that of wandering or unsuitable thoughts. By lack of due mental control, or by habitual indulgence in worldly associations, or in dreamy reveries, many suffer themselves to become incompetent to control their thoughts or to order their speech aright in prayer.

"Some are haunted by worldly and frivolous thoughts, and feel as if their minds were never so silly and trifling, so cloddish and carnal, as when they attempt to pray. It would seem as if all the vanities of the week came crowding into their minds—as if on signal given—the moment they went upon their knees, and petitions for the most stupendous blessings will be ascending, without force or meaning, through a swarm of idle fancies and vagrant thoughts. Or perhaps, amid greater composure of spirit, there

may be little or no longing after the blessing asked. The suppliant begs it, not so much because he appreciates or desires it, as because he thinks it dutiful to make mention of it, and after a formal enumeration of unsought mercies, he goes his way without having actually lodged one prevailing request—one effectual fervent prayer before the throne of grace. Or perhaps, amid considerable earnestness and urgency, the believer is embarrassed and distressed by the unsuitableness of his thoughts—his mean conceptions of those unspeakable benefits for which he is entreating, and his unworthy thoughts of that God with whom he has to do. Now, for all these distractions in sacred duties, the remedy lies with the Spirit himself. We can shut to the door; but he can shut the heart, and lock out the world and all its phantoms. We can open the Bible and look at the promises; but he can open heaven and show each promise in its glorious fulfillment. We can lift our eyes toward the hills; but he can show us ‘Him who is invisible,’ and can enable our souls to rest on him with the sweetest security for the fulfillment of all that he has spoken. We can task ourselves to stated times of devotion, and resolve that we shall spend a given space in prayer; but he can so enlarge the heart—he can make the spirit so strong in the Lord and in the power of his might—he can fill the mind with such longings after angelic purity—such delight in heavenly things—such vehement aspirations after God; he can intercede within us with those yearnings and groanings which cannot be uttered, so that hours and minutes shall not be

counted, and the untiring soul continues 'instant in prayer.'"—*Hamilton*.

Another hinderance to prayer against which we should guard is hurry—whether it be hurry of spirit or hurry to shorten time. The first leads to agitation and confusion, the second robs God of that which he alone can give, and which he does give for no higher purpose than communion with himself—time.

Not that length is an essential quality of prayer. Indeed, the Saviour admonished his disciples against the long prayers of the Pharisees, and also against the vain repetitions of the heathen. Nevertheless he uttered no word which would tolerate hastiness or undue brevity in acts of worship. He himself rose up a great while before day and departed into a solitary place and prayed. He also continued all night in prayer. And when in Gethsemane he went away from his disciples three successive times and prayed, and they successively fell asleep, "for their eyes were heavy," he plead with them plaintively, "Could ye not watch with me one hour?" From these examples we may learn that these are times for specially urgent and protracted prayer, while, from the very nature of the exercise, it usually demands a reasonable fullness and amplitude of time.

It is doubtless true that both the frequency and length of our devotional exercises should be in some measure proportioned to our circumstances, and the external obligations devolving upon us. Nevertheless, we need to be constantly on our guard, lest under the pressure of worldly engagements or excitements we so shorten the time due to both private

and social worship that our prayers become like the imperfect sacrifices of the Jews.

“Ye said also, Behold, what a weariness is it! and ye have snuffed at it, saith the Lord of hosts; and ye brought that which was torn, and the lame, and the sick; thus ye brought an offering: should I accept this of your hand? saith the Lord.” Mal. i, 13.

10. ENCOURAGEMENTS TO PRAYER FROM GOD'S WORD AND PROVIDENCE.

“Nature teaches us to expect that prayer will be heard; the Scriptures *assure* us that it *will* be. In how many places and how many ways is the veracity of God pledged directly or indirectly in his word, that he will hear and answer prayer! In how many passages of Holy Writ is the certain efficacy and great power of prayer asserted or implied! It is implied in the innumerable invitations and commands to pray; to pray always with all prayer and supplication—to pray without ceasing, and never faint—of which the Bible is full; for what are such invitations and commands but mockery; if prayer is of no avail to secure the blessings for which we ask? It is yet more forcibly inculcated in the severe rebukes which are often administered to those who cast off fear and restrain prayer, and who say, ‘What profit shall we have, if we pray unto him?’ It is clearly taught in those numerous passages which impute our destitution of spiritual blessings not to God’s unwillingness to hear prayer, but to our not offering prayer, or not offering it aright: ‘Ye have not, because ye ask not.’ ‘Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask

amiss. Have the workers of iniquity no knowledge? They have not called upon God.' It is expressly declared in passages not a few, where it is the direct object of the sacred writer to insist on the efficacy of prayer: 'The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.' 'The Lord is nigh unto all them that call upon him, to all that call upon him in truth.' 'He will fulfill the desire of them that fear him: he also will hear their cry, and will save them.' It is contained in many great and precious promises, addressed directly to those who offer prayer: 'Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you.' The reasonableness of the doctrine is *argued*, and the appeal is made to our own willingness, as parents, to grant the requests of our children, feeble and imperfect as our own parental love is, in comparison with that of the infinite and universal Parent: 'If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children; how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?' Nay, reference is even made to the power of importunate entreaties to move the hearts and wills of the *selfish* and the *unjust*, in order to set forth the certainty that the prayers of his children will not be unheeded by Him who cannot be unjust, and whose nature is love. Most frequently and most powerfully is the doctrine taught in that most efficacious of all ways of teaching, by example. Time would fail to enumerate a small fraction only of the many, *many* instances on record, in which God *has* heard his servants when they have cried unto him, and sent them the

very blessing which they needed, and for which they prayed. There is no kind or degree of blessing, great or small, temporal or spiritual, which has not been borne on the wings of prayer from heaven to earth. There is no time or place, or form or manner of prayer, private or public, by day or by night, in the house of God or at the family altar, on the house-top or by the sea-shore, for one's self or for one's friends and neighbors, or for the Church, or for the world, that has not been heard and answered. From the intercession of Abraham for the cities of the plain, as recorded in the book of Genesis, to the unceasing prayers of the whole Church in the Acts of the Apostles, what is the history of the Old Testament and of the New but a record of life and death, of blessing and cursing, suspended on the prayers of God's people?

"The course of nature, the vicissitudes of the seasons, the power of the winds and waves, and all the elements, have been directed and controlled by prayer. Prayer saved the lives of shipwrecked mariners; brought up the rebellious, but penitent prophet, from the bottom of the sea, as from the depths of hell; called down fire from heaven to consume the offering on the altar of the living God; spread famine and pestilence over the guilty land, and in due time stayed their ravages; shut up the windows of heaven that it might not rain for long years of drought, and then opened them again, and the heavens gave rain, and the earth yielded her increase. The destruction or preservation of cities, the victory or defeat of armies, the rise and fall of nations, as well as the life and

death of individuals, were suspended on prayer. Prayer carried back the shadow on the dial ten degrees, and added fifteen years to the good king's life. Prayer stood between the living and the dead, and stayed the destroyer's march through the camp of Israel. Again, prayer sent forth the destroyer into the camp of the enemies of Israel, and one night extinguished the whole army; in the morning, they were all dead corpses. Prayer fed the hungry and clothed the naked, and comforted the widow and blessed the fatherless, and healed the sick and raised the dead. Prayer saved Nineveh from destruction, and would have saved Sodom had there been in it ten righteous persons. Prayer averted or delayed many a threatened evil from the chosen people of God, and delivered them from the hand of many an oppressor, and brought them back from their captivity in Babylon, and rebuilt their temple, and would have saved them from the final extinction of their national existence, if they had but united in humble and penitent deprecation of divine justice. Prayer shut the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, opened the doors of prisons, and, knocking off their chains, bade the prisoners go free.

“Prayer, then, has ever been a *ruling power* in the history of the Church and of the world, as that history has been written by the finger of God himself. He has promised to hear prayer, and he has fulfilled the promise. He has pledged himself in every possible way to grant the requests of his people, and he has fully redeemed the pledge. He has taken great pains so to speak, by repeated promises and renewed

pledges, by solemn asseverations and cogent arguments, and earnest appeals and forcible illustrations, and unquestionable facts to encourage men to prayer; and he has taken no less pains not to disappoint the hopes and expectations he has thus raised. He has ever been saying, 'Ask what I shall give thee,' and ever been giving, what men have truly and properly asked. He has invited his people to *command* him—he has permitted them to reason and expostulate and wrestle with him, as it were, in prayer; and so far from being displeased with their boldness, when they have said, 'I will not let thee go without a blessing,' he has rewarded the boldest confidence with the richest gifts. Jacob wrestled with God till the break of day, and then received the name of *Israel*, because, as a prince, he had power with God, and prevailed; and the people of God's choice and covenant and grace have ever since not only borne his better than royal name, but inherited his more than princely power. They are still God's spiritual *Israel*—they still *have power with God, and prevail*. They still have access to him who is the Angel of the Covenant, and influence with him, who is not only Head of the Church, but Head over all things to the Church, and has all power on earth and in heaven. They still move the arm that moves and governs the universe.

"Prayer may well be said to *rule* in the kingdom of nature, the kingdom of providence, and the kingdom of grace, for it has influence with him who is King in all these kingdoms. It touches and sways the scepter of the King of kings, the Lord of heaven and earth.

His truth has long been pledged in his word, by many precious promises, to do great things for his people ; but he will yet be 'inquired' of by his people to do for them these very things which he has thus explicitly promised. Prayer thus enters, as it were, into the very *plan* and *structure* of the *universe*. It is, if we may so speak, one of the elementary principles, or forces, in the original constitution of things—not less so than light, or heat, or gravitation, or electricity. It is an invisible, intangible, principle ; but so are they. It cannot be weighed or measured ; neither can they. The material world was made for moral ends, and moral elements enter, as it were, into its composition—moral forces mold, so to speak, its masses, direct its movements, and control the course of events. And among these prayer is perhaps the chief.

“Still more palpably does prayer enter into the economy of divine providence and divine grace. The efficacy of prayer is one of the great fixed-facts and established laws of God's providential and moral government, which he will no more supersede or dispense with, than he will contravene the laws of his own existence and agency, or the free moral agency of his intelligent creatures. Prayer and pains go hand in hand in the accomplishment of the greatest events in human life ; and what God hath thus joined together man cannot put asunder. Prayer and medicines, prayer and means, are often seen to co-operate marvelously in the cure of diseases, whether in the natural body or the body politic ; and who can say that the means are any more essential, or the medicines any more effective, than the prayers ? Prayer

enters as an essential element into the happiness of the individual, the well-being of the community, and the prosperity of the nation.

“Above all, prayer is a great power in the Church, and in the hearts of men. Prayer brings down the Spirit of God to enlighten the darkness of nature, to convince the world of sin, to lead sinners to repentance, and the remission of their sins ; to dwell in the Church, and in the hearts of all true believers. Here, above all, the power of God is linked to the weakness of men ; the riches of God wait for the requests of men ; the sovereignty of God invites the commands of men. Here is the point to which all the designs of nature and Providence tend ; toward which all material elements and forces converge ; in which all historical events culminate. The material was made for the spiritual ; the world was made, and is preserved for the Church ; and if prayer is a controlling force in the former, it is doubly so in the latter.

“The promises of Christ to hear prayer are expressly extended to the end of the world ; and as all the past victories of the Church have been triumphs of prayer, so we cannot doubt the final and decisive victory of the Captain of our salvation over the powers of darkness will be a more impressive demonstration than has ever yet been seen of the moral omnipotence of prayer.

“But that consummation so devoutly to be wished, is inseparably connected with the effectual, fervent prayers of his people. Effectual fervent prayer, together with the corresponding exertions which cannot fail to accompany such prayer—effectual prayer and

faithful preaching by the ministry—fervent prayer and holy living in the Church—these are the appointed means of which that consummation is the certain result; these the necessary antecedent, of which that is the infallible consequent; these the indispensable condition, without which that can no more be accomplished than an effect can be produced without a cause.”—*Tyler*.

11. PRINCIPAL ELEMENTS OR PARTS OF CHRISTIAN WORSHIP SHOULD BE CONSIDERED SEPARATELY.

No great subject can be well understood without analysis. That of Christian worship forms no exception to this rule. Hence the best writers on prayer have called attention to the various elements which enter into the idea of man's intercourse with God. Prayer regarded in its generic signification embraces invocation, adoration, confession, petition, and thanksgiving. This analysis is not unlike that indicated by the Apostle Paul when he said, “I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men.” 1 Tim. ii, 1.

Every act of supplication involves invocation, which signifies calling upon the name of the Lord. Invocation naturally leads to adoration and praise, as the homage due from the creature to the Creator, and without which we cannot fitly approach him. Moreover, since pious hearts are usually burdened with a sense of unworthiness, confession seems also an appropriate preface to supplication, which is the urgent expression of those wants for which we seek relief in prayer. Again, as prayer is not selfish it goes forth in inter-

cession for others as well as for ourselves, and in like manner offers thanksgiving in their behalf as well as our own.

While it is not claimed that this or any fixed order of thought is essential to prayer, and while in fact certain states of mind actually require the omission or transposition of some topics, yet the order above indicated seems as appropriate as any for a development of the subject and an arrangement of those passages of Scripture which may become specially helpful in the meditation and utterance of prayer. To this end great advantage may be derived from scriptural selections slightly paraphrased in adaptation to devotional uses. The examples subjoined, somewhat after the method elaborated by Bishop Wilkins in 1690, and enlarged by Matthew Henry twenty years later, may not only prove of great intrinsic value, but also suggestive of additional selections, which may be made by every devout reader of the word of God.

12. EXAMPLES OF SCRIPTURAL HELP FOR THE VARIOUS PARTS OF PRAYER.

Invocation.

Our Father who art in heaven. Matt. vi, 9.

Thou, even thou, art Lord alone. Neh. ix, 6.

The great, the mighty, and the terrible God, who keepest covenant and mercy. Neh. ix, 32.

O Lord God of Israel, who dwellest between the cherubim. 2 Kings xix, 15.

Thou whose name alone is Fehovah, art the most high over all the earth. Psal. lxxxiii, 18.

O Lord my God, thou art very great; thou art clothed with honor and majesty: who coverest thyself with light as with a garment. Psal. civ, 1, 2.

O thou who art the true God, the living God, and an everlasting King. Jer. x, 10.

O Lord God of hosts, who is a strong Lord like unto thee? or to thy faithfulness round about thee? Psal. lxxxix, 8.

The high and lofty One that inhabitest eternity, whose name is holy. Isa. lvii, 15.

O King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God. 1 Tim. i, 17.

Thou blessed and only Potentate, thou King of kings, and Lord of lords. 1 Tim. vi, 15.

O thou that hearest prayer, unto thee shall all flesh come. Psal. lxxv, 2.

Thou that art nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and savest such as be of a contrite spirit. Psal. xxxiv, 18.

Thou Father of mercies, and God of all comfort. 2 Cor. i, 3.

Thou Father of lights, from whom cometh every good and perfect gift. James i, 17.

The God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory. Eph. i, 17.

O God of my salvation. Psal. xxvii, 9. My refuge, my fortress: my God; in thee will I trust. Psal. xci, 2.

Adoration.

Righteous art thou, O Lord. Jer. xii, 1.

Thou art holy, O thou that inhabitest the praises of Israel. Psal. xxii, 3.

Holy and reverend is thy name. Psa. cxi, 9.

Thou art holy in all thy works, and holiness becometh thine house, O Lord, forever. Psa. xciii, 5.

Thou art good, and thy mercy endureth forever. Psa. cxxxvi, 1.

Thou art good, and doest good to all; thy tender mercy is over all thy works. Psa. cxix, 68.

Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power. Rev. iv, 11.

We worship Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters. Rev. xiv, 7.

The earth is full of thy riches. So is the great and wide sea also. Psa. civ, 24, 25.

Whom have we in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that we desire besides thee. Psa. lxxiii, 25.

We worship before thee, O Lord; that we may glorify thy name. Psa. lxxxvi, 9.

Praise waiteth for thee, O God, in Zion: and unto thee shall the vow be performed. Psa. lxxv, 1.

We will praise thee, O Lord, with our whole heart; we will show forth all thy marvelous works. Psa. ix, 1.

Halleluia; Salvation, and glory, and honor, and power, unto the Lord our God. Rev. xix, 1.

Halleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. Rev. xix, 6.

Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come. Rev. iv, 8.

Unto Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, and the first-begotten of the dead, unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood;

to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Rev. i, 5, 6.

Confession.

Father, we have sinned against heaven, and before thee. Luke xv, 18.

We have all sinned, and come short of the glory of God. Rom. iii, 23.

Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done evil in thy sight. Psal. li, 4.

Who can understand his errors? cleanse thou me from secret faults. Psal. xix, 12.

The God in whose hand our breath is, we have not glorified. Dan. v, 23.

Out of the evil treasure of our heart we have brought forth evil things. Matt. xii, 35.

Our goodness has been as the morning cloud, and as the early dew it has gone away. Hosea vi, 4.

Our sins have separated between us and God. Isa. lix, 2.

We have grieved the Holy Spirit of God. Eph. iv, 30.

We have named the name of Christ, and have not departed from iniquity. 2 Tim. ii, 19.

We have gone astray like lost sheep; seek thy servants; for we do not forget thy commandments. Psal. cxix, 176.

O that the goodness of God might lead us to repentance! Rom. ii, 4.

May we sorrow after a godly sort, with that sorrow which worketh repentance unto salvation not to be repented of. 2 Cor. vii, 10.

We have been vain in our imagination, and our foolish hearts have been darkened. Rom. i, 21.

We have not regarded the works of the Lord, nor considered the operation of his hands. Isa. lxxv, 2.

We have suffered sin to reign in our mortal bodies, and have obeyed its lusts. Rom. vi, 12.

We have had no fruit in those things whereof we are now ashamed. Rom. vi, 21.

We pray to be delivered from those things the end of which is death. Rom. vi, 21.

Petition and Supplication.

Lord, my hope is in thee. Deliver me from all my transgressions. Ps. xxxix, 7, 8.

Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy loving-kindness. Ps. li, 1.

According to the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions. Ps. li, 1.

Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. Ps. li, 2.

Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. Ps. li, 7.

Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me. Ps. li, 10.

Let my cry come near before thee, O Lord: give me understanding according to thy word. Let my supplication come before thee: deliver me according to thy word. Ps. cxix, 169, 170.

Be thou merciful to our unrighteousness, and our sins and iniquities remember no more. Heb. viii, 12.

Though our sins be as scarlet, let them be as white as snow: though they be red like crimson, let them be as wool. Isa. i, 18.

May we be justified freely by thy grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. Rom. iii, 24.

Thou mayest be just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus. Rom. iii, 26.

May we have the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will. Eph. i, 5.

May we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace. Eph. i, 7.

May we live to the praise of his glory, having first trusted in Christ. Eph. i, 12.

May we be sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance. Eph. i, 13, 14.

May the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, give unto us the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him. Eph. i, 17.

May the eyes of our understanding be enlightened. Eph. i, 18.

May we know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints ! Eph. i, 18.

May we know the exceeding greatness of his power to us who believe. Eph. i, 19.

O that he would grant us, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man. Eph. iii, 16.

That Christ may dwell in our hearts by faith ; that we, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height ; and to

know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that we may be filled with all the fullness of God. Eph. iii, 17-20.

May the Spirit bear witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ. Rom. viii, 16, 17.

May the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, keep our hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. Phil. iv, 7.

May the God of hope fill us with all joy and peace in believing, that we may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost. Rom. xv, 13.

May Christ be made of God to us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption. 1 Cor. i, 30.

As we have received Christ, so may we walk in him. Lord, teach us to endure hardness, as good soldiers of Jesus Christ. 2 Tim. ii, 3.

May we put on the whole armor of God, and be able, having done all, to stand. Eph. vi, 13.

Lord, make us meet to partake of the inheritance of the saints in light. Col. i, 12.

When we fail, receive us into everlasting habitations, (Luke xvi, 9,) that we may be ever with the Lord. 1 Thess. iv, 17.

Promises and Arguments.

Thou, Lord, wilt bless the righteous; with favor wilt thou compass him as with a shield. Ps. v, 12.

They that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing. Ps. xxxiv, 10.

Thou shalt supply all our need according to thy riches in glory by Christ Jesus. Phil. iv, 19.

Thou forgivest all our iniquities ; thou healest all our diseases ; thou redeemest our life from destruction ; thou satisfiest our mouth with good things ; so that our youth is renewed like the eagle's. Psa. ciii, 3-5.

The name of the Lord is a strong tower ; the righteous runneth into it and is safe. Prov. xviii, 10.

Thou, Lord, art always before me : because thou art my right hand, I shall not be moved. Psa. xvi, 8.

The Lord is my light and my salvation ; whom shall I fear ? the Lord is the strength of my life ; of whom shall I be afraid ? Psa. xxvii, 1.

I would dwell in the secret place of the Most High, and abide under the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the Lord, He is my refuge and my fortress : my God ; in him will I trust. Psa. xci, 1, 2.

My help cometh from the Lord, which made heaven and earth. Psa. cxxi, 2.

As the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so the Lord is round about his people, from henceforth, even forever. Psa. cxxv, 2.

The Lord will give strength unto his people ; the Lord will bless his people with peace. Psa. xxix, 11.

Great peace have they which love thy law : and nothing shall offend them. Psa. cxix, 165.

Thou wilt be our guide even unto death. Psa. xlviii, 14.

Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory. Psa. lxxiii, 24.

Thus shall the man be blessed that feareth the Lord. The Lord shall bless thee out of Zion : and thou shalt see the good of Ferusalem all the days of thy life. Yea, thou shalt see thy children's children, and peace upon Israel. Psa. cxxviii, 4-6.

Thou hast remembered us in our low estate : for thy mercy endureth forever. Psa. cxxxvi, 23.

Though I walk in the midst of trouble, thou wilt revive me : and thy right hand shall save me. Psa. cxxxviii, 7.

There is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared. Psa. cxxx, 4.

Thou art he that blotteth out our transgressions for thine own sake, and wilt not remember our sins. Isa. xliii, 25.

Thou didst so love the world, that thou gavest thine only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. John iii, 16.

Thou commendest thy love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Rom. v, 8.

Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Rom. v, 1.

Being justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. Rom. v, 9.

Now, O Lord, thou art our Father, and we are the work of thine hand. Isa. lxiv, 8.

We have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear ; but we have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. Rom. viii, 15.

God is faithful, who will not suffer us to be tempted above that we are able ; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape. 1 Cor. x, 13.

In that he himself hath suffered being tempted, Christ is able to succor them that are tempted. Heb. ii, 18.

God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind. 2 Tim. i, 7.

Christ is entered into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us. Heb. ix, 24.

Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them. Heb. vii, 25.

Thanksgiving and Praise.

Unto thee, O God, do we give thanks, unto thee do we give thanks. Psal. lxxv, 1.

Bless the Lord, O my soul: and all that is within me, bless his holy name. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits. Psal. ciii, 1, 2.

Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised; his greatness is unsearchable. Psal. cxlv, 3.

I will speak of the glorious honor of thy majesty, and of thy wondrous works. Psal. cxlv, 5.

Glory be to God in the highest, and on earth peace, and good-will toward men. Luke ii, 14.

We bless thee that by faith we may behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world. John i, 29.

We bless thee that he hath redeemed us from the curse of the law. Gal. iii, 13.

That by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified. Heb. x, 14.

That he hath loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood. Rev. i, 15.

O the breadth, and length, and depth, and height, of the love of Christ which passeth knowledge. Eph. iii, 18.

Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing, for he hath redeemed us to God by his blood. Rev. v, 9, 12.

Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honor and glory for ever and ever. 1 Tim. i, 17.

To the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen. Jude 25.

Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever. Rev. v, 13.

Blessed be the Lord God of Israel from everlasting to everlasting: and let all the people say, Amen. Psa. cvi, 48.

13. PRAYER SHOULD BE CONSIDERED IN REFERENCE
TO ITS PRINCIPAL OCCASIONS.

Man's primary, and also his ultimate necessities are individual and personal. Hence the universal obligation of private prayer.

Next in importance and universality of obligation is family prayer. The family is the providentially appointed school for the religious education and training of individuals from infancy upward. Its associations are of the most tender and sacred kind,

and a family without prayer is like an individual "without God, and without hope in the world." Hence, family prayer should not only be practiced, but studied with reference to making it in the highest degree edifying and profitable to all who engage in it.

Social prayer may next be mentioned as that in which groups of individuals or families assemble to unite in common supplications for common or neighborhood blessings.

Finally, public prayer embraces those acts of worship in which whole Churches, and even communities, assemble to pay homage to their Creator and Redeemer, to hold communion with the Author of life and of salvation, and to prepare themselves, both individually and collectively, for that more august assemblage in which all men of all nations and ages and kindreds of the earth shall appear before the judgment-seat of Christ to give account of themselves unto God.

These several kinds of prayer will now be considered in their appropriate order with reference to various helps, by means of which believers may be enabled to practice them with increased and increasing spiritual profit.

CHAPTER II.

HELPS TO PRIVATE PRAYER.

BY persons duly impressed with the solemnity of an immediate and personal approach to Almighty God, no sentiment is more sacredly cherished than a humble desire to avail themselves of every help that may enable them to present their offerings more acceptably to God, and thus more certainly secure the blessings they need. Various such helps are available; some by our own acts, and others through the special gift of God.

Attention will first be directed to those auxiliaries of private devotion which are within our own control, and which should be cultivated as the habits of our personal religious life.

1. CONSIDERATION OF THE NATURE AND SPECIAL IMPORTANCE OF PRIVATE PRAYER.

The primary idea of worship is found in the responsibility of each individual soul to its Creator and Judge. Religious duties cannot be performed by proxy. To his own Master each human being must stand or fall. As in the final judgment "every one of us must give account of himself unto God," so in life, each one must pay his vows to the Most High, and personally ask that he may receive spiritual blessings.

No human language can so adequately set forth at once the duty and the reward of private prayer as the words of our Divine Lord.

“But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly.” Matt. vi, 6.

The Greek word *ταμειον*, here rendered “closet,” is, when used in the plural, in Matthew vi, 6, translated “secret chambers.” It conveys the idea of privacy, and when used in connection with the practice of prayer signifies a place of seclusion for the purpose of spiritual worship. It was employed by our Lord in direct antithesis to the “synagogues” and “corners of the streets,” where the hypocrites love to pray, “to be seen of men.” Let it not be supposed that the least merit attaches to any form or construction of what is called the closet. The term is figurative, and the corresponding phrase “shut thy door” simply indicates voluntarily imposed and completed privacy. Persons destitute of secret chambers may comply with the spirit of this command by praying where they can be alone; and if to be alone is impossible, they should withdraw attention from all surrounding objects, and seek to commune with God in the secret chamber of their own hearts. Various scriptural examples show that nearly every variety of place has been employed for acceptable private worship. Isaac’s closet was a field. “He went out to meditate in the field at the eventide.” Gen. xxiv, 63. David’s closet was his place of repose. “Commune with your own heart upon you bed, and

be still." Psa. iv, 4. Hezekiah's closet was turning "his face toward the wall, and praying to the Lord." Isa. xxxviii, 2. Our Lord's closet was a mountain. "When he had sent the multitude away, he went up into a mountain apart to pray: and when the evening was come, he was there alone." Matt. xiv, 23. Peter's closet was a housetop. "Peter went up upon the housetop to pray about the sixth hour." Acts x, 9. From these and other Scriptures it may be conclusively inferred that in the sense of some secret place of prayer, every Christian should have a closet.

2. AN ALLOTMENT OF APPROPRIATE AND REGULAR SEASONS FOR PRIVATE PRAYER.

The best of *places* will avail nothing for acceptable worship unless *TIME* be allotted for their use, and actually employed in them for the purpose of worship. Hence the spirit of various scriptural precepts and examples demands that regular times or periods of every day be set apart for the purpose of secret worship. Each day is in an important sense a miniature of life. If, therefore, we would have our whole lives "adorn the doctrine of God, our Saviour," the several days by which life is filled up should be begun, continued, and ended with acts of personal worship. As a well-spent youth prepares a person for a useful manhood and a happy old age, so a morning hallowed with prayer, and a noontide calmed and strengthened with devotion, prepare the way for a happy evening and a peaceful night; while no day seems well closed up without thanking God for mercies past, and committing soul and body to his keeping

when about to fall into the embrace of "the emblem of death."

The Scriptures do not give express direction as to the times, frequency, or duration of private prayer. Nevertheless they indicate that morning, noon, and night demand observance as periods of daily devotion. The quotations made above illustrate this point, as well as the following from David, the king, and Daniel, the prophet, who may be supposed to represent the best, if not the usual, practice of good men living under the Jewish dispensation.

David said, "Evening, and morning, and at noon, will I pray, and cry aloud: and he shall hear my voice." *Psa. lv, 17.* "It is a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord, and to sing praises unto thy name, O Most High: to show forth thy loving-kindness in the morning, and thy faithfulness every night. *Psa. xcii, 1, 2.* "In the morning will I direct my prayer unto thee, and will look up." *Psa. v, 3.* Also, "Let my prayer be set forth before thee as incense; and the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice." *Psa. cxli, 2.* Of Daniel it is recorded that "His windows being open in his chamber toward Jerusalem, he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime." *Dan. vi, 10.*

In Christianity prayer became, even more than in Judaism, a prominent and essential element of worship. It was both enlarged in its scope, and rendered more spiritual in its character; especially after the gift of the Holy Ghost. While nothing was abated as to the duty of devoting several periods of each

day to prayer, new and gracious promises were given to encourage its exercise ; and exhortations and commands were added requiring Christians to "pray without ceasing, and in every thing give thanks," "to continue instant in prayer," "to give themselves to prayer," "to pray with all prayer, and in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God."

MORNING.

The enlarged and more spiritual view of prayer presented in the New Testament rather heightens than diminishes the significance of the Old Testament allusions to the suitableness of prayer at particular periods of the day. Mark the example of David in his own devotional language: "My voice shalt thou hear in the morning, O Lord ; in the morning will I direct my prayer unto thee, and will look up." *Psa. v, 3.* "O God, thou art my God ; early will I seek thee." "I myself will awake early." "I will sing aloud of thy mercy in the morning." "In the morning shall my prayer prevent (go before) thee." "I prevented the dawning of the morning, and cried : I hoped in thy word." "Cause me to hear thy loving-kindness in the morning ; for in thee do I trust."

It is recorded severally of Abraham, Jacob, Moses, Joshua, Samuel, and Job, that they rose early in the morning to give attention to their religious duties ; and of our Saviour it is written that, "In the morning, rising up a great while before day, he went out, and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed." There are, indeed, many reasons why the morning is

specially favorable to private prayer. The mind is best fitted to commune with God when its powers are most active, and its affections most lively. This is usually our condition after the rest and repose of the night. Besides, every morning may be considered as the opening of a new period of life in which we need both guidance and protection ; and it is highly important to discharge our duties to God, and to seek divine grace to aid us, before we become occupied and perplexed with the cares and business of the day.

EVENING.

No less appropriate is it, having been brought safely through the toils and exposures of a day of life, to offer up our evening sacrifice of prayer and thanksgiving, invoking that protection through the darkness and slumber of the night, without which we should never again behold the light of day. Thus, with the Psalmist, we shall find it a good thing to think and speak of God's "loving-kindness in the morning, and his faithfulness every night."

NOONDAY.

Equally good reasons might also be alleged why it is well to follow the example of David, Daniel, Peter, and other saints of old, in making noonday also a period of regular private devotion.

It is indeed most appropriate to pause for reflection and prayer, even though briefly, amid the occupations, the fatigues, or the excitements of a day of life. As the mariner on his ocean voyage seeks by a daily observation of the sun at its meridian to determine

his latitude and longitude, so it is well for the Christian each noon to secure a view of the Sun of Righteousness as a means of determining his moral bearings and distances. And as the almost universal custom of a noonday repast indicates the necessity of strengthening the body with food, so may we learn the equal necessity of soul invigoration by means of spiritual manna. Thus the customs of humanity, as well as personal experience and the word of God, may instruct us in reference to our spiritual wants and privileges.

The principle and practice here commended have been happily illustrated during recent years by noon-day prayer-meetings in cities, where many Christians, away from their places of morning and evening prayer, and not favorably circumstanced for private devotion, have nevertheless found it practicable to meet for brief engagements of social prayer. God has greatly honored those who by such acts of worship have honored him, and yet no less is he disposed to manifest his favor to solitary worshipers who consecrate a noonday hour to secret communion with him.

Whatever allotment of periods is made, each act of private prayer should, as far as practicable, be preceded by personal preparation for the right discharge of so solemn a duty. The design of preparation is to quicken one's mental activity, to bring his thoughts under control, and especially to concentrate his desires upon proper objects, that both the words of his mouth and the meditations of his heart may be acceptable to God. While it is ever to be remembered that "the preparations of the heart in man, and the

answer of the tongue, is from the Lord," yet it is not to be forgotten that in both God works instrumentally. Hence various acts of personal preparation may be enumerated as additional helps to private prayer.

3. MEDITATION.

Action without thought is usually rash if not profitless. Hence, it is well before an act of prayer to meditate upon the character and attributes of the great Being whom we are about to address in our supplications. The more we consider his mercy and goodness toward us, not only in his providence, but in the economy of his grace as manifested in Jesus Christ, and confirmed to us in the gift of the Holy Ghost, the more our hearts will be kindled into a glow of adoration. As we muse upon these sacred topics the fire of love will burn within us, and we shall be prepared to speak with our tongues. (Psa. xxxix, 3.) Are not many acts of worship cold and formal for lack of preliminary meditation? It is specially appropriate also to meditate on our own wants, considering anxiously for what gifts and graces we have need to supplicate, as well as to pass in mental review the many mercies for which we have occasion to render thanksgiving to our heavenly Father.

4. SELF-EXAMINATION.

One of the most important objects of devotional meditation is to discern our own true character and spiritual condition. This, in fact, corresponds strictly to that self-examination which is enjoined in the Scriptures as a means of determining whether

we be in the faith of the Gospel, whether we are prepared worthily to participate in the ordinances of religion, and whether our lives are true to our profession and our hopes. Self-examination should not only extend to our acts, but to our motives and our conscience. It is well to ask ourselves, Why are we now about to seek audience with the Deity? Also whether we are in a right frame of mind in respect to ourselves and to our fellow-men? (See Matt. v, 23, 24.) The topics of self-examination are numerous. Questions like the following will bring some of them before our minds: Have my thoughts been pure, unselfish, aspiring after the mind that was also in Christ? Have my tempers been right? Have I put far from me malice, envy, anger, and hatred? Have I uniformly cherished and exhibited meekness, long-suffering, gentleness, and love? Have my affections been rightly placed; not set upon things on the earth, but upon things above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God? Have my words been such as became the Gospel of Christ, or have I indulged in vain, trifling, or uncharitable expressions? Have I set a watch before my mouth, and asked God to keep the door of my lips? Have I remembered that for "every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment?" Have I kept God's commandments? Especially that of loving him with all my heart, and my neighbor as myself? If I have not coveted, have I not set my heart upon earthly treasure? Have I honored God with my substance, or given to him or his cause the first-fruits of all my increase?

When faithful self-examination has made known to us any well-circumstanced or easily-besetting sin we must make haste to put it far from us by sincere repentance and utter forsaking, remembering that "if we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

5. DEVOTIONAL READING.

The human mind is often aided in its efforts for self-improvement by agencies from without, specially those which tend to inspire higher and purer thoughts than it would reach unassisted. For this very object the revealed word is given, that it may infuse a quickening power into our hearts. For a similar purpose many devout persons have recorded their religious meditations and experiences—the results of their sacred studies and heart-communings with God. While a general familiarity with the Scriptures and with the lives and experiences of holy men conduces greatly to the spiritual profit of worshipers, and while for that object courses of religious reading should be habitually maintained, it is also well to make the Bible and some choice devotional manual our closet companions. Even a brief glance at a passage of sacred truth may serve to isolate the mind from worldly associations and fix it more appropriately upon the great object of worship. A single thought or heavenly aspiration from some one who has dwelt beneath the shadow of the mercy-seat may aid us to strike the key-note of appropriate devotion, and instantly elevate us to a higher plane of religious enjoyment and service.

Sometimes a brief form of prayer, previously recorded by ourselves or by another, may greatly aid our powers of expression, and stimulate our thoughtfulness of sacred truth. Specially, if we are oppressed with weakness or languor, may we derive elevation and strength from the passages of Scripture classified on preceding pages, and many others like them.

6. MEMORIZATION OF SCRIPTURE.

A mere reading of the words of Scripture will not answer the highest end. They should be memorized, "hid in the heart," incorporated with our mental and spiritual being, that they may mingle with our thoughts and flow out into our words and lives. Hence it should become habitual with Christians to select from the sacred volume daily mottoes for their lives and meditation. In this way, if not by other processes, the mind may become stored with sacred truth and inspired language, which will constantly contribute to make our prayers more worthy of their object and of the Being to whom they are addressed.

7. HABITS OF MENTAL AND EJACULATORY PRAYER.

We cannot always be in our closets nor in the attitude of devotion. Nevertheless we may always be in the spirit of prayer, and there are few circumstances of our conscious life wherein we may not actually offer acceptable prayer to God. He who seeth in secret knows the thoughts of our hearts as well as the words of our lips. Hence our own bosom may become a closet in which we may hourly, yea, momentarily, commune with our Maker.

It is by mental prayer only that we can fulfill the apostolic command, "Pray without ceasing, and in every thing give thanks." But by this means we may have instant and constant communion with the Most High. As a dart is hurled into the air, so a true worshiper may project the thoughts of his mind and the desire of his heart into the ear of Him who heareth prayer, and to whom all flesh should come. Hence this species of prayer is denominated ejaculatory. It was practiced by Nehemiah, who, in the very act of replying to a question asked him by King Artaxerxes, prayed to the God of heaven, and received inspiration as to the answer he should give. Neh. ii, 4. It was also practiced by many other holy men of old, and even by the Lord Jesus when hanging upon the cross.

The value of ejaculatory prayer is inconceivable. It enables a devout mind to hallow any act of life as in the immediate presence of God. It is capable of converting any spot of earth or ocean into a temple of the living God, and every scene of life into an occasion of worship.

It is to be feared that this species of prayer has not received the attention it deserves. From its nature, and the numerous occasions on which it should be employed, it ought to be the subject of special preparation on the part of every Christian, "watching thereunto with all perseverance."

In this view it is well to collate and memorize passages of Scripture bearing on the various circumstances of life.

8. EJACULATORY UTTERANCES FROM THE WORD OF
GOD, CLASSIFIED FOR PERSONAL USE.

On Awaking and Arising in the Morning.

Surely the Lord is in this place; and I knew it not.

Gen. xxviii, 16.

I laid me down and slept; I awaked; for the Lord sustained me. Psal. iii, 5.

Unto thee lift I up mine eyes, O thou that dwellest in the heavens. Psal. cxxiii, 1.

The day is thine, the night also is thine: thou hast prepared the light and the sun. Psal. lxxiv, 16.

Every day will I bless thee; and I will praise thy name for ever and ever. Psal. cxlv, 2.

Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory. Psal. lxxiii, 24.

While Washing and Dressing.

Cleanse thou me from secret faults. Psal. xix, 12.

Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. Psal. li, 2, 7.

My soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness. Isa. lxi, 10.

May I "put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness." Eph. iv, 24.

On Going Out.

The Lord preserve my going out and my coming in from this time forth, and even for evermore. Psal. cxxi, 8.

Lead me, O Lord, in thy righteousness . . . make thy way straight before my face. Psa. v, 8.

For thy name's sake lead me, and guide me. Psa. xxxi, 3.

Lead me in the way everlasting. Psa. cxxxix, 24.

While Engaged in Business.

Establish thou the work of our hands . . . establish thou it. Psa. xc, 17.

I must work the work of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh when no man can work. John ix, 4.

Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord. Rom. xii, 11.

Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee. Isa. xxvi, 3.

In Conversation.

Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth; keep the door of my lips. Psa. cxli, 3.

Let the words of my mouth . . . be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength and my Redeemer. Psa. xix, 14.

Open thou my lips, and my mouth shall show forth thy praise. Psa. li, 15.

To him that ordereth his conversation aright wilt thou show the salvation of God. Psa. 1, 23.

What manner of persons ought we to be in all holy conversation and godliness. 2 Pet. iii, 11.

In Difficult Circumstances.

Cause me to know the way wherein I should walk; for I lift up my soul unto thee. Psa. cxliii, 8.

The righteous cry, and the Lord heareth, and delivereth them out of all their troubles. Psal. xxxiv, 17.

O Lord, I am oppressed; undertake for me. Isa. xxxviii, 14.

In Danger.

What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee. Psal. lvi, 3.

Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust, and not be afraid. Isa. xii, 2.

The Lord preserveth all them that love him. Psal. cxlv, 20.

O thou preserver of men! pardon my transgression, and take away mine iniquity. Job vii, 20, 21.

In Temptation.

How then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God. Gen. xxxix, 9.

Lord, cleanse thou me from secret faults; keep back thy servant from presumptuous sins. Psal. xix, 12, 13.

O Lord, deliver my soul: O save me for thy mercies' sake. Psal. vi, 4.

Blessed is the man that endureth temptation. James i, 12.

When Ill-Treated.

In your patience possess ye your souls. Luke xxi, 19.

Let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing. James i, 4.

Before Reading the Scriptures.

Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. Matt. iv, 4.

Lead me, O Lord, in thy righteousness . . . make thy way straight before my face. Psal. v, 8.

For thy name's sake lead me, and guide me. Psal. xxxi, 3.

Lead me in the way everlasting. Psal. cxxxix, 24.

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When Ill-Treated.

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Let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing. James i, 4.

Before Reading the Scriptures.

Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. Matt. iv, 4.

Quicken me and strengthen thou me according to thy word. Psa. cxix, 28, 154.

O Lord, give me understanding according to thy word. Psa. cxix, 169.

Before Prayer.

Lord, teach us to pray. Luke xi, 1.

I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also. 1 Cor. xiv, 15.

Give ear to my prayer, O God, and hide not thyself from my supplication. Psa. lv, 1.

Going to Church.

I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord. Psa. cxxii, 1.

How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts ! My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the Lord. Psa. lxxxiv, 1, 2.

I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness. Psa. lxxxiv, 10.

On Entering a Place of Worship.

This is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven. Gen. xxviii, 17.

The Lord is in his holy temple: let all the earth keep silence before him. Hab. ii, 20.

Bring an offering, and come into his courts. O worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness. Psa. xcvi, 8, 9.

On Hearing the Gospel.

He that receiveth seed into good ground is he that heareth the word, and understandeth it. Matt. xiii, 23.

Be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only.
James i, 22.

We ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip. Heb. ii, 1.

On Retiring to Rest.

I will both lay me down in peace, and sleep : for thou, Lord, only makest me dwell in safety. Psa. iv, 8.

Keep me as the apple of the eye ; hide me under the shadow of thy wings. Psa. xvii, 8.

He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. Psa. xci, 1.

In the Nightwatches.

The Lord will command his loving-kindness in the day time, and in the night his song shall be with me, and my prayer unto the God of my life. Psa. xlii, 8.

My mouth shall praise thee with joyful lips : when I remember thee upon my bed, and meditate on thee in the nightwatches. Psa. lxiii, 5, 6.

Let the saints be joyful in glory ; let them sing aloud upon their beds. Psa. cxlix, 5.

Occasional Ejaculations.

God be merciful to us, and bless us ; and cause his face to shine upon us. Psa. lxvii, 1.

Bless the Lord, O my soul : and all that is within me, bless his holy name. Psa. ciii, 1.

Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean.
Luke v, 12.

Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief. Mark
ix, 24.

9. PRAYER CONSIDERED AS A SPIRITUAL TELEGRAPH.

By the use of the above and similar ejaculations in the spirit of true worship, every believer may find prayer to be what it is sometimes denominated, a spiritual telegraph. Although in fact a bond of connection between this and the unseen world established long ages ago, yet perhaps some of the functions and advantages of prayer may be rendered more obvious by certain comparisons and contrasts with those of that modern invention which has recently become such an important means of communication between men and nations.

Who can fail to value very highly an agency by which messages can be instantly transmitted to and fro across continents and through oceans? And yet a telegraphic wire can convey but one message at a time, and any one of many accidents may render it incapable of conveying messages at all. Besides, telegraphic stations, as compared with the habitations of men, are few and far between; while telegraphic apparatus being costly, and burdened with a tariff, its use for personal purposes can only be commanded by a few as compared with the masses of men.

On the other hand, there is no place in the wide world from which prayer cannot instantly communicate with the ear of Jehovah; and however many millions of messages in all the languages of the earth

may be at the same moment in transmission, there is no danger either of confusion, mistake, or interruption. And yet this wonderful agency is not only available, but free to all ; so that whether at home or abroad, on land or sea, by night or day, in safety or in danger, every child of want and of mortality can put and keep his heart in communication with the heart of infinite love.

10. THE HABIT OF DEVOTIONAL SINGING.

Singing and prayer have long been closely associated together as acts of true worship. Singing, when uttered in the true spirit of worship, is the highest expression of praise, if not of supplication, that human lips can offer to God. As such it should ever be a part of public, and, if possible, also of family worship. Nor is it less appropriate or profitable in private worship.

There are many who from consciousness of feeble talent or limited cultivation shrink from singing aloud before their fellow-beings. They may, nevertheless, in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, make melody both in their heart, and with their lips unto the Lord. (Eph. v, 19.) Indeed, where there is a disposition to honor God with a true and spiritual worship, urgent motives for self-cultivation in singing to his praise can never be wanting. To whatever extent success may follow diligent effort for so important an object, the singing talent possessed by any individual should be employed, at least in his private worship, with appropriate frequency. He that neg-

lects thus to sing to the best of his ability will suffer actual, if not serious, loss. Not only is singing the appropriate expression of a joyful heart, but it is specially adapted to soothe agitated feelings, and blunt the keen edge of sorrow. It is well, then, for every one to have at command a selection of choice hymns adapted to express the various phases of Christian experience. The recitation, even the remembrance, of such hymns will be a source of spiritual profit. But especially the singing of them, even in a subdued tone, will not only heighten the joys of hours consecrated to private worship, but will also often minister to religious edification when the hands are busied with necessary occupation, and when circumstances of absolute privacy may be impossible. Even in journeys by railroad trains, tedious hours may be well, yea, sweetly employed by the reading and singing in under tones of hymns of praise and devotion. Thus occupied, though in the world, one seems to be above the world, having his "conversation in heaven."

11. THE EXERCISE AND CULTIVATION OF ALL THE CHRISTIAN GRACES.

As sincerity, humility, and faith, are essential to all acceptable worship, so especially in private prayer is it well for each worshiper to study carefully the elements of his own experience, and the action of his own mind. If true to himself, he may in this engagement, more than in any other, determine his actual relation to God, and the questions relating to his real and relative progress in the divine life.

Moreover, in order to a certain profit by the privileges of private prayer, each individual must cultivate the habit of implicit personal and constant reliance upon the aid of the Holy Spirit, and the merits and intercessions of the divine Mediator. The more thoroughly we can, in all acts of private worship, as well indeed as in all other modes of worship, renounce ourselves and all confidence in our own merits, the more certainly and fully we shall be able to avail ourselves of the benefits of that everlasting covenant through which we have access to God, and the blessings of his grace.

12. CHILDREN AND YOUTH SHOULD BE TAUGHT
HABITS OF PRAYER FROM THEIR INFANCY.

When the Lord Jesus Christ was upon earth, little children on the promptings of maternal instinct were brought to him to receive his blessing. In his boundless love, the example was commended in a precept of universal obligation: "Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God." Mark x, 14.

As prayer is the present avenue of access to Jesus, and since, also,

"Prayer is the simplest form of speech
That infant lips can try,"

it is important that infant lips should be accustomed to use words of prayer as early as the idea of want and relief can be grasped by the tender mind, and even before the language of prayer can be fully comprehended. From those brief prayers of childhood

which have come down from past ages, and those gradual enlargements which increasing capacity and wants may render appropriate, all Christian children should pass to the learning, and the daily use of the Lord's Prayer.

The instruction of children in the duty and mode of prayer naturally devolves on parents, and specially on mothers. Recognizing this fact, Hannah More long since in one of her devotional works made the following suggestions designed specially as helps for mothers in this important task. Her words, with slight modifications, are as appropriate to present and future generations as they were to the mothers of her own day :

“Those who are aware of the inestimable value of prayer themselves will naturally be anxious, not only that this duty should be earnestly inculcated on their children, but that they should be taught it in the best manner ; and *such* parents need little persuasion or counsel on the subject.

“An intelligent mother will seize the first occasion which the child's opening understanding shall allow for making a little course of lectures on the Lord's Prayer, taking every division or short sentence separately ; for each furnishes valuable materials for a distinct lecture. Children should be led gradually through every part of this divine composition ; they should be taught to break it into all the regular divisions into which, indeed, it so naturally resolves itself. They should be made to comprehend, one by one, each of its short but weighty sentences ; to amplify and spread them out for the purpose of

better understanding them, not in their most extensive and critical sense, but in their most simple and obvious meanings ; for in these condensed and substantial expressions every word is an ingot, and will bear beating out ; so that the teacher's difficulty will not so much be what she shall say, as what she shall suppress ; so abundant is the expository matter which this succinct pattern suggests.

“When children have acquired a pretty good conception of the meaning of each division, they should then be made to observe the connection, relation, and dependence of the several parts of this prayer, one upon another ; for there is great method and connection in it. A judicious interpreter will observe how logically and consequently one clause grows out of another, though she will use neither the word logical nor consequence ; for all explanations should be made in the most plain and familiar terms, it being words, and not things, which commonly perplex children, if, as it sometimes happens, the teacher, though not wanting sense, wants perspicuity and simplicity.

“Young persons from being completely instructed in this short composition, which, as it is to be their guide and model through life, too much pains cannot be bestowed on it, will have a clearer conception not only of its individual contents, but of prayer in general than many ever attain, though their memory has been, perhaps, loaded with long and unexplained forms which they have been accustomed to swallow in the lump, without scrutiny and without discrimination.

“I would have it understood that by these little

comments I do not mean that children should be put to learn dry and, to them, unintelligible expositions, but that the exposition is to be colloquial. And here I must remark in general, that the teacher is sometimes unreasonably apt to relieve herself at the child's expense, by loading the *memory* of a little creature on occasions in which far other faculties should be put in exercise. Children themselves should be made to furnish a good part of this extemporaneous commentary by their answers, in which answers they will be much assisted by the judgment the teacher uses in her manner of questioning. And the youthful understanding, when its powers are properly set at work, will soon strengthen by exercise, so as to furnish reasonable, if not very correct, answers.

“Written forms of prayer are not only useful and proper, but indispensably necessary to begin with. But I will hazard the remark, that if children are thrown *exclusively* on the best forms—if they are made to commit them to memory, like a copy of verses, and to repeat them in a dry customary way—they will produce little effect on their minds. They will not understand what they repeat if we do not early open to them the scheme of prayer. We should give them *knowledge* before we can expect them to make much progress in *piety*, and as a due preparative to it Christian instruction in this resembles the sun, who, in the course of his communications, gives light before he gives heat. And to labor to excite a spirit of devotion without first infusing that knowledge out of which it is to grow is practically reviving the

popish maxim, that 'Ignorance is the mother of devotion,' and virtually adopting the popish rule, of praying in an unknown tongue.

"Children, let me again observe, will not attend to their prayers if they do not understand them.

"It is not enough to teach them to consider prayer under the general idea that it is an application to God for what they want, and an acknowledgment to him for what they have. This, though true in the gross, is not sufficiently precise and correct. They should learn to define and to arrange the different parts of prayer. And as a preparative to prayer itself, they should be impressed with as clear an idea as their capacity and the nature of the subject will admit, of 'HIM with whom they have to do.' His omnipresence is, perhaps, of all his attributes, that of which we may make the first practical use. Every head of prayer is founded on some great scriptural truths, which truths the little analysis here suggested will materially assist to fix in their minds.

"On the knowledge that 'God is,' that he is an infinitely holy Being, and that 'he is the rewarder of all them that diligently seek him,' will be grounded the first part of prayer, which is *adoration*. The creature devoting itself to the Creator, or *self-dedication*, next presents itself. And if they are first taught that important truth, that as needy creatures they want help, which may be done by some easy analogy, they will easily be led to understand how naturally *petition* forms a most considerable branch of prayer; and divine grace being among the things for which they are to ask, this naturally suggests to the mind

the doctrine of the influences of the Holy Spirit. And when to this is added the conviction which will be readily worked into an ingenuous mind, that as offending creatures they want pardon, the necessity of *confession* will easily be made intelligible to them. But they should be brought to understand that it must not be such a general and vague confession as awakens no sense of personal humiliation, as excites no recollection of their own more peculiar and individual faults. It must be a confession founded on self-knowledge, which is itself to arise out of the practice of self-examination.

“On the gladness of heart natural to youth, it will be less difficult to impress the delightful duty of *thanksgiving*, which forms so considerable a branch of prayer. In this they should be habituated to recapitulate not only their general, but to enumerate their peculiar, daily and incidental mercies, in the same specific manner as they should have been taught to detail their individual and personal *wants* in the petitionary, and their *faults* in the confessional, part. The same warmth of feeling which will more readily dispose them to express their gratitude to God in thanksgiving, will also lead them more gladly to express their love to their parents and friends by adopting another indispensable and, to an affectionate heart, pleasing part of prayer, which is *intercession*. It will be needful to inform them that the omission of this important clause in the *Lord's Prayer* arises from the divine Intercessor not having then assumed his mediatorial office.

“In order that the minds of young persons may

without labor or difficulty, be gradually brought into such a state of preparation as to be benefited by such a little course of lectures as we have recommended, they should from the time when they were first able to read, have been employing themselves at their leisure hours in laying in a store of provision for their present demands. And here the memory may be employed to good purpose; for being the first faculty which is ripened, and which is indeed perfected when the others are only beginning to unfold themselves, this is an intimation of Providence that it should be the first seized on for the best uses. It should, therefore, be employed to lay in a stock of the more easy and devotional parts of Scripture, especially the Psalms. Children whose minds have been early well furnished from these, will be competent at nine or ten years old to produce from them, and to select with no contemptible judgment, suitable examples of all the parts of prayer; and will be able to extract and appropriate texts under each respective head, so as to exhibit without help complete specimens of every part of prayer.

“It would be well, if in those Psalms which children were first directed to get by heart, an eye were had to this their future application; and that they were employed, but without any intimation of your subsequent design, in learning such as may be best turned to this account.

“Children who, while they were engaged in learning these Scriptures, were not aware that there was any specific object in view, or any farther end to be answered by it, will afterward feel an unexpected

pleasure arising from the application of their petty labors when they are called to draw out from their little treasury of knowledge the stores they have been insensibly collecting ; and will be pleased to find that, without any fresh application to study, they are now obliged to exercise a higher faculty than memory ; they have lying ready in their minds the materials with which they are at length called upon to work. Their judgment must be set about selecting one, or two, or more texts, which shall contain the substance of every specific head of prayer before noticed ; and it will be a further exercise to their understandings to arrange the detached parts in one regular whole, occasionally varying the arrangement as they like.

“The habits of the pupils being thus early formed, their memory, attention, and intellect being bent in a right direction, and the exercise invariably maintained, may we not reasonably hope that their *affections* also, through divine grace, may become interested in the work, till they will be enabled to ‘pray with the spirit, and with the understanding also?’”
—*Hannah More.*

CHAPTER III.

HELPS TO FAMILY PRAYER.

1. JUST VIEWS OF THE FAMILY INSTITUTION.

1.) Its divine appointment.

The power and wisdom of the Creator was not more strikingly displayed in the framing of the material universe, than in his plan of setting the inhabitants of the earth in families. The constitution of the sexes, and their mutual dependence upon each other, were, as our Saviour clearly showed, designed and appointed from the beginning. Hence, the sacredness of the conjugal relation. Established in Eden, it has been perpetuated in the successive dispensations by which God has sought to promote the welfare of the human race. In all history, examples both positive and negative have been accumulating to prove that the highest interests of humanity focalize in the family. To note some of these interests in their progressive development, we may begin with the individuals necessary to constitute a family, namely, the husband and wife. Considering them as moral beings, one essential design contemplated by the family union was,

2.) Mutual religious help and sympathy.

While according to the Scripture it was not good for man to be alone, and while accordingly God

provided a helpmeet for him, both were made dependent upon each other's love as an element of the purest earthly happiness, and equally upon each other's aid in accomplishing the nobler objects of their being. Thus human society was not planned merely for the propagation and sustentation of the race, but for moral aid and religious improvement. While each individual soul is responsible to its Author and Judge, and, if left to itself, might be expected to develop its spiritual capacities in conformity with the divine will, yet when two congenial souls are united in moral purpose and spiritual desire, as well as in life, how may they strengthen and support each other. Hence, in a religious point of view, it is important to regard the family relation as offering :

3.) Permanent advantage for the promotion of piety and divine worship.

What in solitary life must be exclusively private, and might therefore tend to weariness if not to forgetfulness, in family life may not only be shared by mutual sympathy, but stimulated by mutual faithfulness and hope. From a community of interests and of wants it might be expected that there would be developed a common fidelity to religious obligation, and a mutual zeal for the promotion of the divine honor. In numberless examples all this, and even more, has been realized from conjugal aid in the service of God, proving not only what may, but what ought to result from married life. Great, indeed, is the loss, and even greater may be the condemnation, of those who by neglect or misconception forfeit their privileges in this regard.

Conceding all that may be claimed for the importance of private and personal worship, we cannot overlook the fact that true religion is eminently social. The first words of the Lord's Prayer suggests the social idea, which, indeed, is equally expressed in the petitions, "Give us this day OUR daily bread," "Forgive us our trespasses," and "Deliver us from evil."

From beginning to end this model prayer is specially adapted to community use, however large or small the circle of worshipers in which it is offered. When in connection with this view of the divine appointment of worship it is clearly apprehended that human life is a scene of moral probation, and that the constitution of society contemplates mutual improvement and discipline preparatory to the life of the future, it may the more easily be understood how the regular practice of family worship may conduce to that great end.

The habit of observing a regular occasion of united worship each morning and evening, is in itself adapted to induce serious thoughtfulness and self-examination as to motives, conduct, and consistency of life. When with this is coupled the regular reading of the word of God, it may be seen that family worship, though limited to a husband and wife, may become an agency of great promise for the advancement of both in religious knowledge, and in all those excellences of character which promise most for their mutual happiness and usefulness. And when, as is usually the case, the family organization embraces from the first various individuals in the capacity of domestics

and friends, the measure of responsibility enlarges in proportion to the circle of influence. Thus it is that family worship, regularly conducted, becomes a school of moral and religious instruction to all the household.

4.) Responsibility of the headship of families.

“The maintenance of domestic religion in every house is primarily intrusted to the head of the family, whoever this may be. If he is totally unfitted for the charge, by an unbelieving mind, or an ungodly life, the consideration is one which should startle and appal him; and it is affectionately submitted to any reader whose conscience may plead guilty to such an imputation. There are instances where divine grace has so endowed some one of the household, even though not the parent or the senior, as plainly to devolve on him the performance of this duty. The widowed mother, or the elder sister, or the actual guardian, may stand in the parent's place. But inasmuch as, in a majority of cases, the service, if rendered at all, must be rendered by the husband and father, we shall treat the subject under this supposition; premising, that the principles laid down apply in most of their extent to any person who may temporarily or otherwise occupy his place.

“No man can approach the duty of leading his household in an act of devotion without solemn reflection on the position which he occupies in regard to them. He is their head. He is such by a divine and unalterable constitution. These are duties and prerogatives which he cannot alienate. There is something more than mere precedence in age,

knowledge, or substance. No act of his, and nothing in his character, can fail to leave a mark on those around him. This he will be apt to feel when he calls them about him to pray to God ; and the more devoutly he addresses himself to the work, the more will he feel it. Though all priesthood, in the proper sense, is now done away on earth, and absorbed in the functions of the great High Priest, there is still something like a priestly intervention in the service of the Christian patriarch. He is now about to go before the little flock in the oblation of a spiritual sacrifice of prayer and adoration. Though he be but a poor and unlettered man, who bows his hoary head amid a band of sons and daughters, yet is he more sublimely honored than prayerless kings. His head is encircled with that "crown of glory" which is found "in the way of righteousness." The father who, year after year, presides in the sacred domestic assembly, submits himself to an influence which is incalculably strong on his own parental character.

"Where is a parent so likely to admit the impression of his responsibility, as where he gathers his household for worship? It is true, at all times, that he is bound to watch for their souls ; but now he is placed where he must feel it to be true. His family are met in a religious capacity, and looking up to him for guidance. His eye cannot light on a single member of the group who is not committed to his especial charge. Among all these there is not one for whom he shall not give account at the judgment-seat of Christ. The wife of his youth ! to whom shall she

look for spiritual watch, if not to him? And how unnatural the family relation when this guardianship is repudiated and this relation reversed! The children! if ever saved, it will probably be in some degree consequent on his exertions. Domestics and apprentices and sojourners are all committed, for a term longer or shorter, to his care. The domestic minister will surely cry, Who is sufficient for these things? and most of all when in the very performance of these duties. If his conscience is kept awake by personal acquaintance with God, he will never enter upon family worship without sentiments which involve this very accountability; and such sentiments cannot but have their impression on the parental character.

“Unspeakable good would ensue if every father could feel himself to be the earthly, but divinely-appointed, head-spring of religious influence to his household.

“The Christian *husband* needs to be reminded of his obligations; he cannot be reminded of them too often. The respect, the forbearance, the love which the Scriptures enjoin toward the feebler and more dependent party in the conjugal alliance, and which are the crown and glory of Christian wedlock, are never more brought into action than when they who have plighted their faith to one another years ago are brought day by day to the place of prayer, and lift up a united heart at the feet of Infinite Mercy. As the head of every man is Christ, so the head of the woman is the man. His post is responsible, and that in spirituals. He can seldom feel it more sen-

sibly than when he falls down with the partner of his burdens at the throne of grace.

“Prayerless parents have cause to tremble. God’s anger may light upon them in their parental relation, as Eli’s neglect was visited. They have no right to expect parental happiness. They place themselves and their household in the defenseless condition of the heathen. ‘Pour out thy fury upon the heathen that know thee not, and upon the families that call not on thy name.’ Family prayer invites and bespeaks the blessing of God on all concerned, but chiefly on him who leads in it. Better a roofless than a prayerless house ; better beg one’s bread with prayer, than deny God by a neglect of this chief means of domestic prosperity. One who has any genuine religious faith, and any trust in God’s promises, must be assured that in the rearing of his household, in providing for their support and education, in governing and restraining them, and in laboring for their souls, no good can ensue but by the blessing of God ; and this blessing, in the way of direction and grace, the Christian parent should join with his family in asking every day.”—*Abridged from F. W. Alexander.*

2. ADEQUATE VIEWS OF PARENTAL OBLIGATION.

Whatever opinions may be cherished as to the other designs of the family organization, all must concede its importance as an asylum for the young, and as the divinely appointed agency for the protection and moral development of the children whom God may bestow upon a household. This subject

although somewhat involved in preceding remarks, will now be presented more definitely as illustrative of the advantages secured to children by regular and believing family prayer.

Undoubtedly the first great advantage to be named is, that children are thus made the subjects of prayer in conformity with the provisions of God's own covenant with his people, and with the numerous promises of his word by which they are encouraged to pray.

"As the great topic of the parent's heart is his offspring, so they will be his great burden at the throne of grace. And what is there which the father and mother can ever do for their beloved ones that may be compared with their bearing them to God in daily supplication? And when are they so likely to do this with melting affection, as when kneeling amid the group of sons and daughters? And what prayers are more likely to be answered than those which are offered thus? The direct influence of family prayer is, then, to bring down the benediction of Almighty God upon the children of the house. In saying this, though we should not add another word, we adduce a sufficient and triumphant reason for the custom of our fathers. But there are incidental and collateral advantages which must not be overlooked.

"Daily worship, in common, encourages children to acts of devotion. It reminds them, however giddy or careless they may be, that God is to be adored. In many ways it suggests to them the duty and blessedness of praying for themselves.

They are here familiarized with what may be called the method of prayer; and have manifold petitions brought before their minds, which may afterward be made their own. While the favored circle is bowed before God, there is scarcely a son or daughter who will not sometimes be arrested by the voice of the father in supplication, and prompted to appropriate the petition. In many instances, we may suppose, the first believing prayers of the Christian youth ascend from the fireside. Slight impressions, otherwise transient, are thus fixed, and infant aspirations are carried up with the volume of domestic incense. Is it too much to say that in this way family worship becomes the means of everlasting salvation to multitudes.

“The daily regular and solemn reading of God’s holy word by a parent before his children is one of the most powerful agencies of a Christian life. We are prone to undervalue this cause. It is a constant dropping, but it wears a mark into the rock. A family thus trained cannot be ignorant of the word. The whole Scriptures come repeatedly before the mind. The most heedless child must observe and retain some portion of the sacred oracles; the most forgetful must treasure up some passages for life. No one part of juvenile education is more important. Between families thus instructed and those where the Bible is not read the contrast is striking. To deny such a source of influence to the youthful mind is an injustice, at the thought of which a professor of Christianity may well tremble. The filial affections are molded by family worship. The child

beholds the parent in a peculiar relation. Nowhere is the Christian father so venerable as where he leads his house in prayer. The tenderness of love is hallowed by the sanctity of reverence. A chastened awe is thrown about the familiar form, and parental dignity assumes a new and sacred aspect. There is surely nothing unnatural in the supposition that a froward child shall find it less easy to rebel against the rule of one whom he daily contemplates in an act of devotion. The children look more deeply into the parent's heart by the medium of family prayer. A single burst of genuine fatherly anxiety in the midst of ardent intercession may speak to the child a volume of long-hidden and travailing grief and love. Such words uttered on the knees, though from the plain untutored man, are sometimes as arrows in the heart of unconverted youth. The child is forced to say within himself, 'How can I offend against the father who daily wrestles with God in my behalf? How can I be careless about the soul for which he is thus concerned?' And often when separated from the domestic circle has the wanderer bethought himself, 'My father and mother are now praying to God for their boy!' He is little read in the human heart who fails to recognize here a great element of filial piety, or who refuses to believe that the tenderness of a child's attachment is increased by the stated worship of the household.

"There is a kindred influence upon fraternal affection. Praying together is a certain means of attachment; those who pray for one another cannot but love. Think of it, and confess how impossible it is

for sons and daughters, every day, during all the sunny years of youth, to bow down side by side in common devotions and mutual intercessions, without feeling that their affection is rendered closer and holier by the very act. Brothers and sisters who have thus been led together to the throne of grace from infancy are linked by ties unknown to the rest of the world.

“In the rearing of youth, nothing can be thought insignificant which goes to train the thoughts, or give strength and direction to the habits. It is by a repetition of perpetual, patient touches, small in themselves, that the straggling branches of the vine are led by the gardener to grow and spread aright. It is by ten thousand inappreciable dots and scratches that the plate of the engraver is made to represent the portrait or the landscape. So it is by an ever-renewed application of right principles, that parental care in the hand of sovereign grace, gives Christian habit to the infant mind. In so precious a work nothing is unimportant; we must give heed to the minutest influences, as we save the filings of gold, and the dust of diamonds. For this reason we ascribe to domestic worship a large share in creating useful habits in the young. We scruple not to say that a child receives advantage by being led to do *any thing*, provided it be innocent, at stated times, with frequent repetition, and with proper care. The daily assembling of a household at regular periods, for a religious purpose, directly tends to promote good habits. It is a useful lesson for the speechless babe to acquire the patient stillness of the hour of

prayer. It is good for a family to have a religious motive to early rising, and timely attention to personal neatness. It is something to have punctuality in the observance of two hours each day enforced from the very dawn of life. Those who may be tempted to put this aside with a smile should first institute a comparison in regard to these particulars between any two families, of which one worships, and the other worships not. We are willing to abide by the result of the examination, for we are sure that in the latter will be found a great looseness of domestic arrangement, tardy rising, a slovenly toilet, a long, irregular, time-wasting breakfast, more conformable to the modern fashion than to Christian usage; evenings without an affectionate rally of the house, and late hours of retiring, or no fixed hours at all.

“Parents who may read this book are respectfully invited to consider whether they do not owe it to their children to give them the daily worship of God. Especially are the sons and daughters of the Church, whose own youth was hallowed by this constant observance, charged to recall their impressions of the past, and to reckon up the advantages which they are denying to their offspring.”—*J. W. Alexander.*

3. RIGHT VIEWS OF SOCIAL OBLIGATION.

The apostle's statement that “No man liveth unto himself,” is capable of an exact paraphrase in reference to families. In a similar sense no family should live to itself, or for the sole good of its affiliated members. Hence, as the various members of families

are more or less dependent on other persons for domestic service and for society, every family organization should contemplate the moral and spiritual welfare of all who come within the sphere of its influence.

While it may not be wise to insist that domestics should attend upon family worship, when from prejudice or priestly command they are unwilling to do so, yet Christian householders should use, according to their best judgment, all moral means to induce every servant, or other person connected with the house, to attend regularly upon the daily worship. It sometimes happens that persons in these circumstances are both ignorant and irreligious. Hence their moral necessities are urgent. It may be, that for the first time in life they have the opportunity of gaining the true knowledge of Christ and his Gospel. Besides, owing to their position and necessities, they have but a limited opportunity for attention to religious subjects or duties.

“To reside, even as a servant, in a family where the worship of God is duly observed, is an unspeakable privilege. This is one of the collateral methods of diffusing Christianity, which is silent but operative. If our whole duty were performed in this respect, no domestic would ever leave our dwelling without some benefit derived from the daily service of God.

“It must be evident that where domestics are brought in together with sons and daughters to take an equal part in the daily worship of God, they will necessarily feel themselves to be more openly recognized as a part of the family. They will acknowledge the common interest. They will grow into

sentiments, not only of respect, but of tenderness for their superiors. The relation which may at times seem galling to pride will partake of friendly and sacred regard. In a word, the happiness of the servant will be promoted. Thus the way will be cleared for other and higher impressions. The truths of heavenly wisdom will flow more readily into hearts prepared by the softening influences of kindly emotion. Daily access to the throne of grace on errands of earnest entreaty will scarcely fail to issue in the conviction, conversion, and salvation of a multitude of souls."—*J. W. Alexander.*

But our social obligations are not limited to those actually dwelling within our households. Families have their circles of influence, as among other families, and few houses are not more or less frequented by visitors and guests.

"When the friend whom we cherish is under our roof, he should be made to discern the reigning principle of the place. In a dwelling where there is no worship he may be pardoned if he say, 'Surely the fear of God is not in this place.' But in a religious household, even the casual visitor must some time be made sensible that there is a perpetual reference to another world. Suppose him to be under the Christian roof at the appointed hour of prayer. It is well in every such case if the service is not omitted or postponed. He may be a stranger to such solemnities; he may be even careless or profane. Yet when he sees the whole family gathered, with stillness and decorum; when he hears the word of God read, and joins in the psalm of praise, and kneels with the rest

in an act of worship, it will not be marvelous if he be drawn to some new and serious reflection. The impression may be greater than we suppose, from the very influence of novelty.* These acts of divine service will have a tendency to show him that here, at least, is a circle in which God is continually recognized. If a householder himself, he will necessarily be led to contrast with this the condition of his own domestic affairs; and if he is a professing Christian living in neglect of this duty, he will doubtless experience a pang of conscience. Example is powerful; he may see his way more clear to make his own habitation a house of prayer.

“‘A few years ago,’ says the Rev. J. Hamilton, ‘an English gentleman visited America, and spent some days with a pious friend. He was a man of talent and accomplishments, but an infidel. Four years afterward he returned to the same house a Christian. They wondered at the change, but little suspected when and where it had originated. He told them that when he was present at their family worship on the first evening of his former visit, and when, after the chapter was read, they all knelt down to pray, the recollection of such scenes in his father’s house long years ago rushed on his memory, so that he did not hear a single word. But the occurrence made him *think*, and his thoughtfulness ended in his leaving the howling wilderness of infidelity, and finding a quiet rest in the salvation wrought out by Jesus Christ.’

“By this pleasing incident we are led to observe that the influence of family worship is peculiarly

great upon guests who abide for some days or weeks in a Christian house, even if they have been brought up at home without such privileges. All that has just been pointed out here, operates more freely and for a longer time. The beauty of holiness, and the pleasantness of the ways of God, are silently brought before their contemplations. We could name instances in which such a sojourn in a pious family has made deep impressions on worldly minds in favor of evangelical religion. This ought surely to rest on the thoughts of Christian householders in the way of duty. We are, perhaps, ready enough to make our guests welcome, to provide for their lodging and refreshment, to show them the wonders of our environs, and to invite friends for their entertainment ; but besides this we owe a duty to their souls. It ought not for a moment to be thought possible that a dear friend or relative should stay weeks, or even days, in our house without receiving some spiritual advantage. How often have the visits of careless young persons to godly families been made instrumental of their salvation.

“ But we must by no means narrow down the efficacy of daily worship to that which takes place within a particular house. The whole neighborhood feels the influence. Let us not undervalue the power of Christianity. No single believer can abide long in a place without making it in some degree better ; the true leaven will work ; the true light will shine. Nor can any consistent God-fearing household fail of diffusing a hallowed force in every direction. Bad influences fly thus, why shall not good ones ? It is

true, from the depravity of our nature, men follow evil rather than good ; but it is also true, blessed be God ! that divine grace uses the very same channels of connection for the conveyance of truth and holiness.

“ Suppose only a single pious family observing the worship of God without shame or concealment in the midst of a wicked community. Their peculiar ways, and this service in particular, will attract notice and beget remark. The visitor, or the passer by, will hear the voice of praise or prayer. The observation will be natural, ‘ THAT house is a house of prayer ; God is honored in that house.’ Neighbors will learn that here is a man who arranges all his business, and fixes all his hours, with reference to the daily household devotion, which nothing is allowed to interrupt. There are occasions in which this peculiarity of the dwelling is brought into full light. In cases of sudden illness, calamity, or soul trouble, every one will know whither to go for a praying man to kneel by the bed of death, or to speak peace to the troubled conscience. Where such households are multiplied in any town or neighborhood, by means of counsel and example, there is a mighty increase given to the expansive Christian principle, such as often changes the whole face of society. How earnestly ought we to pray that this particular means of social and national improvement, may receive an immediate extension throughout our beloved land, and that unfaithful professors living in neglect of this plain duty may awake to repentance and reformation ! What a change might we

expect soon to see in regions where now the feeble piety which exists is like a half-expiring taper, which scarcely reaches beyond its little home circle!"—*F. W. Alexander.*

4. FIXED DETERMINATIONS AND CONSISTENT PRACTICE.

Although under right impulses, or a strong sense of duty, domestic worship may be commenced, it will not be consistently maintained in any household unless the responsible head of the family shall have resolved that "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." There is no form of religious obligation in which it is more important for a husband and wife to be united in heart and action than in this. As either one is liable at any moment to be left alone for the discharge of this duty, so it is desirable beyond expression that both be cordially united in maintaining it, whether in each other's presence or absence.

In resolving upon a course of so great propriety, and indeed of such immeasurable importance, it is well to consider fully the embarrassments that will arise not only in commencing but in continuing such a service. It should be foreseen that various embarrassments and hinderances will be encountered, and also, with equal clearness, that helps with which to meet and overcome them will not be wanting. Hinderances will be "of the earth, earthy," but helps will be imparted by the Lord from heaven. Therefore let all resolutions contemplating the erection and maintenance of the family altar be formed in the strength, and with a firm reliance upon the

promises and blessings of Almighty God. Once formed, let these resolutions be illustrated by persevering faithfulness. No ordinary cause should be allowed even for once to interrupt the observance of the hour of prayer, and when extraordinary interruptions occur, as sometimes they may, there should be an eager watchfulness for opportunities of resuming the appointed act of worship. The danger of omission for trivial causes is manifold. Not only will easy diversions from its discharge indicate low conceptions of the importance of the duty, but it will induce in those responsible for it the probable neglect of other duties, thus fastening upon them tendencies to sins of omission, which, if not promptly and sternly checked, may lead to apostacy itself. Various causes of hinderance to be specially guarded against or provided for might be enumerated, such as the tardy or irregular arrival of persons who ought to be present, the absence of the person usually conducting the worship, the presence of company, whether strangers, or neighbors and friends, or any combination of these and similar circumstances. Timely foresight and strong resolve may not only in most cases overcome such drawbacks, but in some cases may actually convert them into occasions of special benediction to those who bear their cross, or who, as strangers or guests, are made the subjects and participants of family prayer.

5. A SUITABLE ALLOTMENT OF TIME.

Time is God's own gift, and it cannot be better employed than in his direct service. Hence, to avoid

all tendencies to irregularity on the plea of insufficient time, it is well, if not essential, to plan in advance for the daily observance of the morning and evening hour of worship. Such a plan involves the adjustment of all household arrangements in harmony with the great purpose of constantly honoring God in the home sanctuary. It should equally involve a harmonious adjustment of the periods of worship with the necessary business arrangements of the head of the household, and, if possible, with those of all its members. Considerate foresight in matters of this kind will prevent interruptions, strengthen good purposes, confirm good habits, and, best of all, will secure heavenly benedictions upon praying families in their endeavors to maintain constant communion with the source of spiritual life.

6. DOMESTIC READING AND RECITATION OF THE WORD OF GOD.

If the public reading of the holy Scriptures should be regarded as an important part of worship in Jewish synagogues and Christian churches, it certainly should not be thought less important in Christian families. Indeed, in what circumstances is it possible to consult the living oracles with greater promise of spiritual profit? In the quiet of a home circle, in the midst of tender associations, among persons having common interests, affections, and wants, the sacred volume may prove alike the source of instruction, of consolation, of quickening in all good desires, and of guidance in the way to heaven.

With reference to the greatest advantage to be

derived from the exercise, it is proper to consider the modes in which God's word may be rendered most profitable in connection with family worship. Among thoughtful persons, the question has been more or less discussed as to whether the head of the household or some designated member of the family group should read, all others listening, or whether the several members of the family, children of a proper age included, being supplied with books, should read in rotation. The proper determination of the question seems to be this. Both methods are good, and deserve to be adopted or alternated in accordance with circumstances. The latter is highly appropriate when children or young persons are present who are more likely to become interested as participators in this branch of worship than as mere hearers. It is very desirable to impress children from an early age as well with their privileges as with their duties. Moreover, this plan of joint reading is peculiarly favorable to the act of occasional questions or comments from the head of the family, designed to develope and apply the truth read. On the other hand it may be conceded that the continuous reading of the word by a competent person may render it generally more impressive to adult minds. In either case a skillful intermingling or addition of brief and pertinent comments may add to the impressiveness and interest of the occasion. For this task it becomes leaders of family worship to specially qualify themselves by previous study and meditation, never forgetting to adhere to the strictest relevance both of thought and expression.

In either form of reading, too long lessons should be avoided, lest weariness or inattention ensue. It is not always necessary to complete a chapter. Neither is it always, although often it is best, to read an entire book of the Bible in course. Judicious selections may be made from time to time, and if in harmony with a system of Sunday-school or Bible-class study all the better, always, however, contemplating within given periods a perusal of all the principal parts of the sacred volume.

The further question has arisen, whether it is essential to maintain the formal reading of Scripture in connection with family worship both morning and evening. To this it may be replied, that when circumstances do not specially favor actual reading, for instance, at evening worship, an excellent substitute is the recitation of passages of the divine word previously appropriated by memory, and designated in thought for that use. In view of a daily usage like this both for general or individual profit, the practice of hiding a portion of God's word in the heart each day ought to be considered a duty obligatory upon both young and old. Indeed, it is impossible, for many reasons, too strongly to commend the habit of daily memorizing portions of holy Scripture, and the plan of reciting texts in rotation at the hour of family worship is greatly conducive to its promotion and maintenance.

In whatever manner the word of God is brought before the mind of worshipers in the domestic circle, it may be expected to exert a most wholesome influence upon the act of prayer which is to follow. It will become suggestive of both thoughts and lan-

guage to aid their thanksgivings and supplications. It will tend both to variety and propriety in their forms of address to the throne of grace, reminding them, as it is designed to do, of their obligations and short-comings, as well as of the greatness, the condescension, the mercy, the love, and the precious promises of Him who loved us, and gave himself for us.

7. A SUITABLY VARIED ORDER OF SUBJECTS.

It should be the constant aim of those who conduct family prayer to avoid monotony both of subject and manner. This is the more necessary from the oft-recurring sameness of the circumstances in which the act is performed. Hence, in addition to the suggestion of the foregoing section to seek variety from the varied teachings of Scripture, it may also be found advantageous to adopt a rotation or variation of subjects by which, instead of embracing too many topics more or less repetitiously in every prayer, some one topic in addition to proper references to personal circumstances may be chiefly dwelt upon at one time. The introduction of too many topics into a prayer necessitates either too great length, or a generality and vagueness of expression not favorable to edification. On the contrary, the isolation and full development of a single important topic tends to a wholesome brevity, to clearness of conception, and definiteness of faith. The subjoined list of topics is intended to be suggestive of a suitable variation of special topics for prayer. Its enlargement or rearrangement is possible to every reader. In its present

form it supplies a different topic for each morning and evening of a week.

1. CHRISTIAN MINISTERS.—The call of laborers by the Lord of the harvest. The guidance, support, and success of those in the field. That their lives may be holy, their preaching pure and powerful, and their influence efficacious in leading men to the knowledge of the truth.

2. CHRISTIAN CHURCHES.—Their purity, their enlargement, their activity, their zeal, their increased liberality and power for good.

3. OUR COUNTRY.—Its legislators, its rulers and magistrates, national, State, municipal. Its people, native and immigrant. Its internal quiet. Its peace and prosperity.

4. THE WORLD.—Its enlightenment. Its evangelization. The removal of ignorance. The suppression of tyranny. The peace of nations. Civil and religious freedom.

5. CHRISTIAN MISSIONS.—Missionary societies and missionary contributors in all lands, that their activity, liberality, and faith may be increased. Mission fields, for example, Africa, China, India, etc., that the way of the Gospel may be effectually opened. That native converts may be multiplied and qualified for usefulness. Christian missionaries, that they may be aided, encouraged, and rendered increasingly successful.

6. FALSE RELIGIONS.—For the overthrow of Mohammedanism, Jewish superstition, and Paganism in its varied forms. For the suppression of idolatry, and the conversion of its devotees.

7. SABBATH OBSERVANCE.—That God's holy day may be honored in all countries. That its sacredness may be observed in communities and in families, in high places and in low, by the reading of God's word and attention to his worship.

8. SUNDAY-SCHOOLS.—That all children may be taught of the Lord. That teachers may be prayerful, exemplary, and skillful in communicating and enforcing truth. That all appliances and agencies of instruction may be sanctified to spiritual ends, and the early salvation of the young.

9. PUBLIC EDUCATION.—That schools and colleges may be under Christian influence. That science may not be perverted, but developed to the praise of Him who made and governs all things. That all teachers may be endowed with wisdom from on high. That all students may come to the knowledge of the truth and fear of God.

10. TEMPERANCE AND MORALITY.—That drunkenness and vice of every form may come to an end. That the traffic in intoxicating drinks may cease. That debasing appetites may be subdued. That drunkards and vicious persons may be reformed. That the young may be led in paths of virtue, and saved from all the evils of sin.

11. THE POOR AND THE SICK.—That they may be succored in their extremity by the rich and the benevolent. That their distresses may be overruled for their spiritual good. That they may be led to the source of all true riches, and that the dying may have victory over death, and enter into life eternal.

12. THE BEREAVED AND THE TEMPTED.—That the

former may be led to the source of true consolation, that their afflictions may prove blessings in disguise. That the latter may be delivered from the power of Satan, and led to the Saviour of men.

13. THE PRESS.—That its influence may be pure and elevating. That its excesses and perversions may be controlled. That through its agency the word of God may be printed in all languages, and disseminated among all people. That more and more it may be the organ of Christian truth, and auxiliary to the spread of the Gospel.

14. REVIVALS OF RELIGION.—That they may be pure, pervading, general, and constant. That they may give greater efficiency to ministers and Churches. That they may every-where arouse the moral anxieties of the people, that they may rebuke sin, that they may diffuse the fear of the Lord, and promote the salvation of men.

8. DEVOTIONAL SINGING.

As praise is an important element of true worship, it is not surprising that we find in the Scriptures many and urgent exhortations to sing unto the Lord, and to sing aloud the high praises of God. "Praise ye the Lord : for it is good to sing praises unto our God ; for it is pleasant ; and praise is comely." Psa. cxlvii, 1. "Both young men, and maidens ; old men, and children : let them praise the name of the Lord." Psa. cxlviii, 12, 13.

If such be the instructions of the divine word, how appropriate is singing in family worship, and how important is it that all members of the family

should join in it? One great advantage of the present period of Sunday-school instruction is, that most Christian children are taught from their very infancy to sing hymns of praise to the Saviour of the world. It is well that what they have learned on the Sabbath should be practiced during the week ; and that they be encouraged, both in private and family worship, to raise their hearts and their voices to Him who claims them for his own.

It is also specially appropriate and interesting, in those families where instrumental music is cultivated as a fine art and a personal accomplishment, to witness the dedication both of the instrument and of the cultivated talent to the aid of divine worship in the household temple. On the other hand, it should be considered a reproach to a Christian family that the piano or other instrument of music should be freely employed for secular uses, but be made to utter no sweet sounds in praise of the Author of all harmony, and in honor of the Giver of all talents and privileges.

While it must be conceded that in some individuals the talent of music is small, yet it is claimed that all possess it in some degree, and are bound to cultivate it to the extent of their power for religious uses. The same may be affirmed of Christian families as wholes, since it rarely happens that there is no one in a Christian household who might not by proper effort become qualified to lead in the singing of devotional hymns. Whether, therefore, the talents of the household be few or many, let them all be consecrated to the praise of the Giver, and the possessors

will be edified, and God will be glorified in their use.

9. SELF-CULTIVATION IN REFERENCE TO THE APPROPRIATE CONDUCT OF FAMILY WORSHIP.

This subject, although of a more general bearing than the one above presented, is kindred to it. While the task of leading the devotions of a family may be acceptably performed by persons possessing but one talent, yet it may also fitly employ the highest talents of the most gifted. It is a task, moreover, in which talents few or many may be increased by appropriate use and cultivation. Hence all on whom, in the providence of God, this responsibility devolves, should by all available means seek to qualify themselves for its discharge in such a manner, as through the agency of family worship, to promote in the highest degree their own religious profit, and that of all with whom they may be associated.

The means of self-cultivation for this duty are in all respects similar to those suggested under the head of private prayer. Indeed, it cannot be doubted that any individual's closet devotions will be largely influential upon his habits of domestic, social, and even public prayer. The act of true prayer is always the same. Nevertheless, adaptations are required in harmony with the differing wants and circumstances of those with whose concurrence and in whose behalf prayer is offered.

He, therefore, who conducts family prayer should consider, should, indeed, study the condition and moral wants of those with whom and for whom he

prays. He should also seek to qualify himself to express those wants in the most direct, earnest, and yet simple manner. He should maintain variety by selecting and carefully meditating proper subjects of prayer. He should imbue his mind with the truth and language of Scripture, that he may set his words and wants acceptably in order before the Lord. He should also earnestly covet, and specially pray for, the gift of prayer from Him who heareth prayer. By these and other kindred means he may hope not only to maintain an ever-increasing growth and strength in spiritual life, but also in the capacity of leading others with himself to the throne of the heavenly grace.

10. THE OCCASIONAL USE OF APPROPRIATE FORMS
OF PRAYER.

There are two ways in which well-composed forms of prayer may be serviceable. The first is that in which they are read as helps to thought and language as a means of making the mind familiar with the proper topics and styles of devotion. Many orators, as a preparation for high mental effort, have accustomed themselves to stimulate their thoughts and quicken their recollection and control of words by severe preliminary study. On the same principle it may sometimes be well, especially when the mind is inactive and thought monotonous, to take in hand some manual of true devotion as a prompter to elevated conceptions of truth, and a help to put our minds in frame for worship. On the principle by which writers and speakers are recommended to peruse well-written

books as helps to improvement in language and style, it may also be profitable for all Christians to read with more or less frequency choice specimens of devotional language, such as may be found in many of the prayers composed by good and holy men, and left on record for the use and edification of others.

The second use referred to above is that in which written or printed pages are adopted as the medium of devotional expression in actual prayer. While it is the object of this book primarily to aid those who may consult its pages in attaining the gifts of readiness and power in extemporaneous prayer, it offers as helps to both those ends a limited number of devotional forms adapted to the use of families at morning and evening worship, as well as on some special occasions.

While none are advised to depend on them as a constant practice, yet it is believed that occasionally they may be used with great propriety and profit. Certainly with such forms at hand all excuse is taken away for the neglect of family worship where there is any one, young or old, of sufficient moral courage to bow the knee of devotion within the domestic circle, and by aid of these helps call upon the name of the Lord.

11. THE FREQUENT USE OF THE LORD'S PRAYER.

It is not claimed that the words of our Saviour, commonly called the Lord's prayer, were prescribed as an unvarying form of worship, but rather that they were designed to serve as a suggestive model

after which the prayers of Christ's disciples should be fashioned in all ages. In this view the more that sacred formula is used and studied, the more instructive and suggestive it will be found. Volumes have been written upon this prayer without exhausting it, or even doing full justice to its meaning.

As a brief indication of the wealth of significance treasured up in this brief form of words, the following extracts are subjoined:

"It consists of three parts:—

"I. *An Introduction*, expressing the goodness and greatness of Him to whom we speak:

"'Our Father, which art in heaven.'

"II. *Six Petitions*, three of which have a more immediate respect to the glory of God:

"1. 'Hallowed be thy name.

"2. Thy kingdom come.

"3. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.'

"And the three remaining more immediately respect our own personal wants, temporal and spiritual:

"1. 'Give us this day our daily bread.

"2. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us.

"3. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.'

"The first four of these petitions are for the obtaining of good, and the last two for the averting of evil.

"III. *A Conclusion*, not only acknowledging the perfections of God, but most powerfully pleading them as a reason why our prayers should be heard.

“For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.”

Not only the form but also the spirit of the Lord's Prayer is beautiful. This form of petition breathes—

A *filial* spirit—Father.

A *catholic* spirit—Our Father.

A *reverential* spirit—Hallowed be Thy name.

A *missionary* spirit—Thy kingdom come.

An *obedient* spirit—Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

A *dependent* spirit—Give us this day our daily bread.

A *forgiving* spirit—And forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors.

An *anxious* spirit—And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

A *confiding* and *adoring* spirit—For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.

While it is possible that even so sacred a form as that given by our Saviour himself may, through indifference or inattention to its meaning, be subjected to vain and profitless repetitions, yet it is not on that account to be omitted by sincere worshipers. On the other hand, being specially adapted to associated worship, it is eminently appropriate for repetition in connection with every morning prayer in which a family may engage. It should, moreover, be repeated in concert. Infant lips should be taught to utter it in unison with those of middle and hoary age.

What scene can be more beautiful than that of all the members of a family joining reverently to address

to the ear of Infinite Love the tender and expressive words in which the blessed Saviour taught his disciples to make known their wants to their Father in heaven. Even though no other words be prefaced or added, this form is in itself a rich and comprehensive prayer. Hence, let it be habitually offered. If used alone it will not be inappropriate or unheard. If added to the best words in which we can make our requests known unto God, it may go far to supply their many defects.

CHAPTER IV.

HELPS TO SOCIAL PRAYER.

THE term social is here used in a broader sense than that in which it is sometimes applied to family worship. It relates to the voluntary association of devout persons for the purpose of united worship. It is applicable to a company of two or three, and also to the representatives of a neighborhood or a Church or a community of Churches.

Religious susceptibilities are closely interwoven with our social nature, and the mutual interdependence of human beings makes it most appropriate for them to become associated together in acts of devotion. As neighbors, friends, and fellow-Christians of any given period of time are fellow-travelers to eternity, so should they be fellow-worshippers by the way. Should any feel the need of helps and encouragements to enable them to participate in this branch of worship with edification and comfort, they may find them to a greater or less degree in the observance of the following duties.

1. ATTENTION TO THE SCRIPTURAL WARRANT FOR
SOCIAL PRAYER.

Without pausing to trace in the sacred records indications of the practice of social worship in patriarchal times, and the numerous proofs of its

prevalence among those that "feared the Lord," and "spake often one to another," under the Jewish dispensation, the reader is referred to the New Testament for definite information as to the Christian duty of social prayer.

1.) The practice of social prayer was contemplated in many of the instructions of the Lord Jesus Christ to his disciples.

These instructions were commenced at an early period of the Saviour's earthly ministry, and continued to its close. They embody such precepts and teachings as the following, the importance of which only increases with the lapse of time :—

"I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." Matt. xviii, 19, 20.

"And he spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint. Shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them? I tell you that he will avenge them speedily. Luke xviii, 1, 7, 8.

"I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you ; seek, and ye shall find ; knock, and it shall be opened unto you." Luke xi, 9.

"All things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive." Matt. xxi, 22.

"The harvest truly is plenteous, but the laborers are few. Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest,

that he will send forth laborers into his harvest." Matt. ix, 37, 38.

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you. Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full." John xvi, 23, 24.

"I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them me; and they have kept thy word. Now they have known that all things whatsoever thou hast given me are of thee. For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me. I pray for them. Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; that they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me." John xvii, 6-9, 20, 21.

"Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation." Matt. xxvi, 41.

2.) Social prayer was practiced by the infant Church.

"These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren." Acts i, 14.

"Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls. And they continued

steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers." Acts ii, 41, 42.

"Peter therefore was kept in prison: but prayer was made without ceasing of the Church unto God for him." Acts xii, 5.

3.) It was practiced and enjoined by the apostles.

"We will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word." Acts vi, 4.

"Ye also helping together by prayer for us, that for the gift bestowed upon us by the means of many persons thanks may be given by many on our behalf." 2 Cor. i, 11.

"For I know that this shall turn to my salvation through your prayer, and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ." Phil. i, 19.

"Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus." Phil. iv, 6, 7.

"Now I beseech you, brethren, for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake, and for the love of the Spirit, that ye strive together with me in your prayers to God for me." Rom. xv, 30.

"Continuing instant in prayer." Rom. xii, 12.

"I exhort therefore, that first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men: for kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. For this is good

and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour."

1 Tim. ii, 1-3.

"And let us consider one another, to provoke unto love, and to good works: not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching." Heb. x, 24, 25.

"Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints." Phil. vi, 18.

Since the example and precepts of the apostles were thus recorded by the pen of inspiration, for the instruction and guidance of Christians and Churches in after ages, they remain to us as authoritative expositions of the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning us. The Scriptures quoted therefore, and other passages of similar import, may be considered decisive of the general duty of social prayer. This duty, however, like most others enjoined in the word of God, may be corroborated and brought somewhat more fully to the appreciation of thoughtful minds by additional considerations.

2. ATTENTION TO THE RELIGIOUS NECESSITY AND ADVANTAGES OF SOCIAL PRAYER.

True religion is adapted to every phase of our being and demands to be exemplified in all the relations of human life. Hence all persons who would fulfill God's requirement to love their neighbors as themselves, should manifest that love by inviting them to go to the house of prayer, and join in acts of devotion. This principle was illustrated by the practice

of the pious in olden times. David acknowledged it when he wrote, "I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord. Our feet shall stand within thy gates, O Jerusalem." "For my brethren and companions' sakes I will now say, Peace be within thee." *Psa. cxxii, 1, 2-8.*

It was also foreshadowed by ancient prophecy as destined to have a more general and urgent fulfillment under the reign of the Messiah. "Many people shall go and say, Come ye and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob, and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths." *Isa. ii, 3.*

"The inhabitants of one city shall go to another, saying, Let us go speedily to pray before the Lord, and to seek the Lord of hosts: I will go also." *Zech. viii, 21.*

Thus, indeed, has it come to pass in recent periods of the history of the Church, and is doubtless destined to be exemplified more and more as the epoch of the world's conversion is hastened to a realization. This species of religious effort is not limited to the Sabbath-day, nor to ministers of the Gospel, nor to large assemblies. It is appropriate to young or old, to male or female, and to the smallest gatherings of sincere worshipers. Nevertheless it is not inappropriate to the largest assemblies, and in some if not all its forms should be deemed an essential branch of Christian activity in all Churches. Among the advantages of social prayer with its other kindred acts of worship, the following deserve special consideration.

(1.) It is profitable for developing the graces and strengthening the faith of believers.

The apostle Paul could not have been unmindful of the spiritual necessities of Christians when he left on record such instructions as these: "Exercise thyself unto godliness." "Let us consider one another, to provoke unto love, and good works: not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching."

It is, indeed, a principle of our moral no less than of our mental and physical constitution that exercise strengthens. In harmony with this principle it is not only appointed to all true disciples of Christ to "go work" in the vineyard of the Lord, but to be assured that their labor is not in vain in the Lord. If when sincerely and earnestly put forth it be not profitable to others, it certainly will be to themselves. Thus it has always been in the history of the Church, and of individual believers.

(2.) It is advantageous in aiding others to come to the knowledge and experience of the truth. Meetings for prayer and Christian conference have often been greatly blessed as an agency for the conversion of souls, and for the development of the incipient Christian character. When in public congregations persons are convicted of sin, and impressed with the duty of commencing a religious life, there is often no favorable opportunity of manifesting their desires to others, or of securing the special instruction and sympathy due to them on the part of the Church.

Prayer-meetings and class-meetings, properly conducted, are specially adapted to supplement what is lacking in more public or miscellaneous assemblies. In them, the latter especially, individuals can be counseled according to their personal circumstances, and also encouraged to bear their cross, and exercise their own gifts in prayer, praise, and exhortation.

Nor is this true of adult Christians only, but also of children anxious to follow the Saviour. Inasmuch as Christ specially commanded that the little ones should be brought to him, it is not enough that the Church should simply offer them baptism. Having placed them by that act in covenant relation with God, she should ever after nourish and cherish them as heirs of the kingdom of heaven. Specially from the period of their capacity to make an intelligent choice of the way of life, should she supplement and fortify parental teaching with spiritual instruction adapted to their tender years and their growing temptations. For this service the Church should engage her best talent, which indeed will often be found among intelligent Christian women, who, as mothers or teachers, have learned to be skillful in adapting instruction to tender minds, and in encouraging the free expression of religious hope and purpose. Thus should Christ's little ones be trained up not only to attend and love the means of grace, but also in appropriate ways to participate in them. And thus, in fact, should all God's children strive together in prayers to God for each other, and in mutual efforts for each other's edification.

3. A RECOGNITION OF PERSONAL OBLIGATION TO PROMOTE AND MAINTAIN SOCIAL WORSHIP.

It cannot be doubted that low and incorrect views on this subject have been, and even now are, a source of great weakness to the Church, as well as of loss to individual Christians. If persons ignore the duty of attending upon social worship, or of participating in its exercises, it is impossible for them to secure the benefits it is designed to confer upon themselves as worshipers, or to make it an agency of good to others. Indeed, only those who recognize and illustrate its claims upon their personal co-operation, can hope to secure the great and peculiar benefits associated with social worship. Such claims are not limited or occasional, but universal and of constant force; and where they are duly acknowledged and honored, how does the work of God revive and prosper, how are souls built up and strengthened, how are the impenitent awakened and converted, and how is God glorified in the assemblies of his saints! But as labor is the condition of reward, so to secure such great ends requires effort and perseverance, "in season and out of season." And even though abounding blessings may be secured by those who sustain the full measure of their duty, yet it is possible for others through spiritual slothfulness to remain unprofited in these very acts. It is, therefore, incumbent on all who would serve God fully, not only to attend upon gatherings for social worship, but to participate appropriately in their exercises.

It may here be remarked that social worship

involves praise as well as prayer, and that it also affords occasions for mutual encouragement and exhortation. It is an act of true devotion to say with David, "I will praise the name of God with a song, and will magnify him with thanksgiving." *Psa. lxi, 30.* It is no less so to call upon others in the language of the Psalmist, "O magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt his name together." *Psa. xxxiv, 3.* Whenever a truly pious soul makes its "boast in the Lord, the humble shall hear thereof and be glad." Hence the sincere declaration of religious experience is not only an appropriate act of homage to the Giver of blessings, but a specially appropriate means of awakening a religious sympathy, and prompting the devotional feelings and activities of others.

This topic is illustrated by the inspired account of the memorable prayer-meeting of the Pentecost. In it we first note the general attendance both of the ministry and membership of the infant Church. After an enumeration of the eleven apostles by name, it is said, "These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren." *Acts i, 14.* It is further recorded that the number of the names of the disciples together were about a hundred and twenty. That these all participated in the varied exercises as well as the peculiar blessings of the occasion, is further indicated by various expressions of the scriptural narrative. The following verses are directly in point: "And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a

sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance." Acts ii, 1-4.

Various expressions in the apostolic epistles also indicate the custom of the early Christians to assemble frequently for social worship, in which all participated in such exercise as praying, exhorting, interpreting, and speaking to themselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in their heart to the Lord. See Eph. v, 19; Acts xvi, 25; 1 Cor. xiv, 26; Col. iii, 16; James xiii, 14.

From the examples recorded during the apostolic period, modern Christians may gather much instructions as to their individual and collective duties and privileges in respect to social worship. Having done so, it would be well for every sincere follower of the Lord Jesus Christ to resolve not only to attend, regularly and interestedly, meetings held for prayer and praise, but also to take an appropriate part in the exercises of such assemblies.

4. PERSONAL PREPARATION FOR THE DISCHARGE OF THIS DUTY.

Christians desiring to honor God, and promote their own spiritual welfare in this means of grace, should not be indifferent to a suitable preparation for securing so far as possible its highest advantages.

Private prayer, Scripture readings, and the special meditation of some suitable religious topic, are excellent means of preparation for personal and mutual profit in prayer-meetings and other forms of social worship. To enter such meetings in a cold or careless frame of mind, is not only to hazard the loss of personal advantage, but to incur the risk of becoming dead weights upon the devotions of others. What is needed on the part of all, is a spiritual state in harmony with the direct objects of prayer and praise and mutual edification. Whoever brings to an assembly for such purposes a condition of spiritual coldness or torpor will insensibly impart a portion of his feelings to those around him, however genial the influences he may receive from them; and should it unfortunately happen that a majority of those assembled are in a spiritually torpid state, the best effect of the meeting may, without special divine manifestations, be fatally neutralized. Nevertheless, none should, on account of a conscious lack in this particular, absent themselves from the social means of grace. The very consciousness indicated may, if sincerely regretted and humbly confessed, be overruled as a means of quickening to one's self and others. Indeed, one great advantage of such assemblies is that of confessing our faults one to another, and praying one for another, that we may be healed. James v, 16. When, therefore, on the part of any there is a sincere sorrow on account of past neglect of duty or of present coldness of heart, coupled with an earnest desire to be aided by the prayers and experiences of others, an early opportunity should be taken to

manifest that consciousness, and to request that aid, however great the cross of so doing. Such an act, when performed in humility and godly sincerity, will not only tend to soften the heart previously callous, but to arouse the sympathies and to awaken and concentrate the religious interest of others.

By such means a great end of social worship is gained in the realization of special and present objects of supplication as well as of answers to prayer. Hence it is well for the conductors of such meetings often, if not always, to give opportunities at an early stage of each meeting in which persons present may suggest their conscious wants, and the topics of prayer which burden their hearts in behalf of others. Without proper expressions on topics of this nature, there is danger that too much time will be lost in generalities and routine utterances. Whereas, by an opportune concentration of thought and desire upon important specific objects, the hearts of all present may be united both in supplication and in faith.

In harmony with the principle thus indicated, the custom of reading and preferring requests for prayer in behalf of absent persons has often been signally blessed as an evident cause of stimulating the faith of God's people, and of securing answers to prayer in the awakening and salvation of wanderers from God. Authentic records prove that in numerous cases in very recent times, answers to prayer have been as undoubted, if not as wonderful, as any narrated in Bible history. Volumes of such records have been published which are full of instruction as to the prayerful duty of God's people as well as of

encouragement to faith. Yet no human records are adequate to portray the history of prayer in this one aspect. The annals of eternity alone can fully disclose the results of that wonderful intercourse between God and those of his children who have made known to him their wants by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving. Only when the books of the divine remembrance are opened, embracing the words and works of all human beings, will it be possible to comprehend the full history of prayer, and its diversified influences upon the lives, the character, and the destinies of men. Nevertheless, enough may be known by authentic statements and personal observations to impress all thoughtful minds with the greatness of the privilege, and the sacredness of the duty on the part of God's people to meet often together, and pray fervently one for another as well as for the numerous objects of interest connected with the Christian Church and the salvation of the world.

5. THE RIGHT CONDUCT OF SOCIAL WORSHIP.

While very much depends upon this, it can rarely, if ever, be secured by arbitrary rules. All persons, therefore, on whom devolves either regularly or occasionally the conduct of prayer-meetings or class-meetings, should study the interests and conditions involved as subjects of the highest practical importance. Such persons should at least be profoundly impressed with the fact that their own conception of the duty in which they engage, as well as their own mode of conducting it, and, indeed, their whole mode of life, can hardly fail to be influential either for

better or worse upon others. On them it specially devolves to be in the spirit of prayer that their words may be seasoned with grace, and may be agencies of blessing to others. They should be in lively sympathy with all the appropriate objects and necessities of prayer. While they should come prepared to open the exercises in a proper form, and to introduce the further services with guiding and encouraging words, they should scrupulously avoid monopolizing the time of others. Specially should they guard against monotony and tedium in any portion of the exercises, but rather seek to promote a suitable variety by a proper intermingling of prayer, exhortation, and praise. To secure this desirable variety brevity is essential, but most of all, that true spiritual liberty imparted by the Spirit of God which prompts free and relevant utterances as varied as the phenomena of nature.

Sometimes the leaders of social religious meetings may promote the interest and spirituality of those means of grace by announcing in advance topics for special meditation and scriptural inquiry on which the minds of worshipers may be concentrated, and their feelings harmonized before assembling. At other times it may be better to let the circumstances of the occasion give direction to the thoughts and supplications of the hour. Irrespective of theories, persons who conduct meetings for social worship should be able to adapt themselves, and the exercises under their guidance, to the necessities of any occasion or phase of circumstances that may arise. They should be quick to discern the spiritual condition of

persons present, and of the meeting as a whole, and skillful in giving a special direction or character to the exercises in adaptation to any exigency that may be manifest, whether through the prevalence of dullness or despondency, or of the awakening, converting, or sanctifying power of divine grace.

Next to the preaching of the word itself, if, indeed, any comparison may be instituted, it is inexpressibly important that meetings for social worship be conducted with that blending of discretion, of earnestness, and of spiritual unction, by which the people of God may be interested and edified in the discharge of duties essential alike to their Christian life and influence. Yet incapacity, or even indiscretion, on the part of a leader is no sufficient excuse for any to neglect so important a means of grace, or diligent efforts to derive the highest benefit from a personal participation in its exercises. Neither will any propriety nor excellence in the conduct of a social religious service excuse any one present from the duty of personally calling on the name of the Lord, and of stirring himself up to take hold of the Invisible and the Eternal. No one who, surrendering himself to spiritual sloth, depends upon the zeal and faith of others, can expect to be blessed in his deed; while all who, with personal zeal and individual faith in God's promises, do thus surrender themselves, need not fail to be profited at the same time that they become agencies of blessing to others.

CHAPTER V.

HELPS TO PUBLIC WORSHIP.

A.—General.

THE idea of public worship is best attained by considering that of individual and social worship expanded so as to embrace the wants, the circumstances, and the united act of a great congregation, a solemn assembly. From the earliest periods, God has dealt with mankind not only as individuals, but as communities. As he has bestowed great blessings upon men in their aggregate social and public relations, so he has required of them corresponding forms of public acknowledgment and service. The successive revelations of his will in reference to worship seem first to have contemplated families, then groups of families; afterward nations, and at length the world.

God's covenant with Abraham was not only established with him personally, but had its most important significance in reference to his seed after him. "And God said unto Abraham, Thou shalt keep my covenant therefore, thou, and thy seed after thee in their generations." Gen. xvii, 9. In the Jewish nation we see a type of the Christian Church. Hence the great significance of the appointed "tabernacle of the congregation," the forerunner of the temple at Jerusalem, and of Christian Churches throughout

the world. It was in immediate connection with the giving of the law including the specific appointment of the Sabbath that God commanded the construction of the tabernacle, the court of worship, and the tent of the congregation. And it was from and through this center of public worship that God spake to Moses and the children of Israel during their wanderings in the wilderness, preparatory to their entrance upon the higher privileges of the land of promise. The divine directions in reference to Sabbath services, and the solemn assemblies of the chosen people, remain still in force in all their moral and spiritual significance to indicate the public religious duties of mankind. In fact, the command of God, originally given with reference to the tabernacle, "Let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them," (Exod. xxv, 8,) has an enlarged significance, and a vastly wider bearing under the Christian dispensation. So the experiences of pious Jews in connection with the tabernacle and the temple, are being continually reproduced in the life and worship of Christians. How many sincere worshipers of the present day, as well as of the past ages of Christianity, have been able to adopt the language of David and other writers of the Old Testament, as expressive of their own experiences in the house of God, and the service of the Christian sanctuary? The following quotations may serve for an instructive comparison:—

"In my distress I called upon the Lord, and cried to my God: and he did hear my voice out of his temple, and my cry did enter into his ears." 2 Sam. xxii, 7.

“O God, thou art my God ; early will I seek thee : my soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for thee in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is ; to see thy power and thy glory, as I have seen thee in the sanctuary.” *Psa. lxiii, 1, 2.*

“When I thought to know this, it was too painful for me ; until I went into the sanctuary of God ; then understood I their end.” *Psa. lxxiii, 16, 17.*

“The Lord made the heavens. Honor and majesty are before him : strength and beauty are in his sanctuary. Give unto the Lord, O ye kindreds of the people, give unto the Lord glory and strength. Give unto the Lord the glory due unto his name : bring an offering, and come into his courts. O worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness : fear before him, all the earth.” *Psa. xcvi, 5-9.*

“One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after ; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in his temple. For in the time of trouble he shall hide me in his pavilion : in the secret of his tabernacle shall he hide me ; he shall set me up upon a rock. And now shall mine head be lifted up above mine enemies round about me : therefore will I offer in his tabernacle sacrifices of joy ; I will sing, yea, I will sing praises unto the Lord.” *Psa. xxvii, 4-6.*

“A day in thy courts is better than a thousand. I had rather be a door-keeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness.” *Psa. lxxxiv, 10.*

“Behold, bless ye the Lord, all ye servants of the

Lord, which, by night stand in the house of the Lord. Lift up your hands in the sanctuary, and bless the Lord. The Lord that made heaven and earth bless thee out of Zion." Psa. cxxxiv, 1-3.

"Praise ye the Lord. Praise God in his sanctuary: praise him in the firmament of his power. Praise him for his mighty acts: praise him according to his excellent greatness." Psa. cl, 1, 2.

"Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, he shall come, saith the Lord of hosts." Mal. iii, 1.

Such records are not only descriptive of the past and of the present, but prophetic of the future. In them any reader of the Scriptures may see both his own privileges and duties in reference to public worship. From them and other Scriptures it is apparent that God delights and demands to be honored in acts of public devotion. Publicly as well as in private, the Father seeketh (requireth) such to worship him as worship in spirit and in truth. John iv, 23, 24.

God has said, "Them that honor me I will honor." 1 Sam. ii, 30.

Also, "The Lord taketh pleasure in them that fear him, in those that hope in his mercy. Praise the Lord, O Jerusalem; praise thy God, O Zion. For he hath strengthened the bars of thy gates; he hath blessed thy children within thee." Psa. cxlvii, 11-13.

Public worship, then, is a medium of accepted approach to the King of kings and the Lord of lords,

by which individual and public blessings are secured at the hand of the Lord, and there is no way in which individuals can more certainly render acceptable homage to their Creator than by joining their fellow-men in the solemn services of the sanctuary; while to neglect this duty is to treat his requirements with contempt, and to jeopard the highest interests of the present life as well as of that to come.

Public prayer requires to be considered in two aspects: 1. In regard to the manner in which it should be conducted by officiating ministers. 2. In reference to the manner in which it should be participated in by worshipers. Respecting both these topics erroneous essential conditions are, unhappily, quite too prevalent. In large sections of the nominal Christian Church, public worship is regarded chiefly as a ceremony in which an officiating priest mumbles prayers in an unknown tongue, the people only participating as spectators, or as silent actors in the ceremony. In other sections of the Church, while it is deemed essential that prayers be offered in a living language, congregations, or at least many members of congregations, are accustomed to listen as if the prayers were addressed to themselves, or if addressed to God, yet chiefly for the edification of human hearers. Opposed to all extreme and intermediate errors of which those mentioned are types, is the proper idea of public prayer. True and acceptable public prayer is an act in which the members of an assembly individually and jointly unite their hearts, and to some extent their voices, in presenting to God a common and intelligent offering of

adoration, of praise, or of supplication to their common God and Father in heaven. Essential to this idea is a common and living language, devout hearts, attentive minds, and reverent attitudes. Without the guidance either of a fixed form or of a leading utterance, there cannot be unity of sentiment or expression. Without hearts imbued with true devotion, all lip utterances will be vain. Without close mental attention the thoughts will wander, and the spiritual sacrifice will be marred; while an attitude inexpressive of devotion will contradict the words that may be uttered, and counteract the spirit of worship.

It would savor of superstition not to admit that on those fixed and general topics and occasions which rise superior to particular circumstances, there is a beauty and an advantage in offering, whether from book or from memory, appropriate prayers which are familiar to all. This is true to the extent that all will unite with sincere heart and humble voice in making the prayers offered their own.

The public and simultaneous recitation of the Lord's Prayer in public congregations is a happy illustration of this view, also of the confession preceding the holy sacrament. Without proceeding to discuss the extent to which liturgical prayers of a truly evangelical type may or may not be in the highest degree promotive of spiritual good, it is sufficient here to urge that all who practice or prefer that form of worship should endeavor to enter with the deepest sincerity and earnestness into the forms and expression adopted, not pausing in the letter, but making the inner spirit of the expressions the language of

their souls. This can only be done on the conditions and in the manner indicated above, and the persons who most fully illustrate those conditions will doubtless most fully accomplish the high requirement of worshipping God in spirit and in truth.

But in a vast majority of Protestant churches that form of public prayer is preferred in which a minister leads or guides the devotions of the whole assembly, by a vocal utterance in which all present mentally join. This type of public worship is illustrated by the prayer of Solomon at the dedication of the temple, (1 Kings viii, 8;) also by that of Jehoshaphat, when fearing invasion from a destroying army, (2 Chron. xx;) of Ezra in a period of great public distress, (Ezra ix;) and of the Levites on a similar occasion. (Neh. ix.) It is, moreover, clearly indicated in the New Testament as that practiced by Christ and his apostles. It has prevailed in all the better ages of the Church, and is evidently appointed to descend to the remotest periods of time. It therefore deserves the thoughtful consideration of all Christians as a means of grace in the right employment of which in their proper capacity their highest happiness and eternal interests are involved.

B.—For Leaders of Public Worship.

Having considered some general aspects of the subject, it is next in order to take into view those agencies by which acts of public worship may be rendered most acceptable to God and most profitable to men. Attention will therefore be given primarily to those helps by which Christian ministers may best

qualify themselves for conducting the worship of public congregations; secondly, to those by which attendant worshipers may secure to themselves the greatest spiritual advantage while waiting upon God in his sanctuary. Among them it is safe to mention the following as important, if not essential, helps for ministers as the conductors of public prayer.

1. A THOROUGH STUDY OF THE SUBJECT OF PRAYER
AS SET FORTH IN THE WORD OF GOD.

For such a study it is obvious that nothing short of the Bible as a whole can be a sufficient text-book. Yet such a text-book it is, embodying precepts, promises, examples, and history, illustrating the subject through successive dispensations and long periods of time, and closing up with glimpses of that future world in which the prayers of saints will appear as perpetual incense before the throne of God and the Lamb. (Rev. v, 7, 8.) Not to recapitulate scriptural quotations and allusions made under foregoing topics and in preceding pages, it may be well additionally to indicate a line of study specially appropriate to the present theme. Prominent among the prophetic foreshadowings of the responsibilities of Christian ministers in reference to prayer is that of Isaiah, "I have set watchmen upon thy walls, O Jerusalem, which shall never hold their peace day nor night: ye that make mention of the Lord, keep not silence, and give him no rest, till he establish, and till he make Jerusalem a praise in the earth." Isa. lxii, 6, 7. This declaration is in beautiful harmony with the whole tenor of the New Testament, to which we

must more especially look for instructions as to spiritual worship.

First of all, the example and teaching of the Lord Jesus Christ deserve attention. In his proper character as the world's great Teacher, and the founder of the Church of God, our Saviour was instant in prayer. He prayed in the temple, in synagogues, in solitary places, and in the presence of multitudes. Prayer, too, was a prominent subject of his instructions to his disciples. He taught them to pray for their enemies as well as for their friends and themselves, in secret as well as in public. He gave them a model form of daily prayer. He also enjoined humility, sincerity, and perseverance, even importunity in prayer, and all to be coupled with the largest requests and unwavering faith. He appointed prayer in his own name, and gave assuring promises of its answer:—

“Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you. Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full.”
John xvi, 23, 24.

“And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it.”
John xiv, 13, 14.

“I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain; that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you. . . . If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall

ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you." John xv, 16, 7.

These instructions were given specifically to his disciples in their capacity as public teachers and ministers of the word, and they were fully illustrated in the subsequent history of the apostles.

The infant Church was inaugurated by prayer. Prayer preceded the election of an apostle to the office from which Judas, by transgression, fell. Prayer introduced and followed the scenes of the Pentecost. Prayer was mingled with every form of apostolic life and labor. When the persecuting Saul of Tarsus through divine grace became a believing Christian, the first record of his new life was, "Behold, he prayeth." From that hour he became a man of prayer. He not only continued to urge his supplications to God in private, but on reaching Jerusalem he prayed in the temple, and received an instant answer from the Lord. Acts xxii, 18. Paul's ordination to his great missionary work was preceded by fasting and prayer. Acts xiii, 3. When he and Barnabas ordained elders in all the Churches, they prayed with fasting, and commended the newly ordained ministers to the Lord, on whom they believed. Acts xiv, 23. That his sermons and addresses were usually accompanied with prayer may be safely inferred from the examples recorded in connection with the scene of worship by the river side at Philippi, (Acts xvi, 16,) his address to the elders at Ephesus, (Acts xx, 32,) and his farewell meeting with the Christians at Tyre, with whom at parting the apostle and his companions "kneeled down on the shore and prayed." Acts xxi, 5.

His brief prayer in the presence of King Agrippa illustrates the same habit. Acts xxvi, 29. Indeed, the devotional character of Paul's epistles may be considered as happily indicative not only of his general mode of thought and life, but specially of the habits of his ministerial life. Although the prevailing character of his epistles is didactic, yet they are permeated with expressions of warm and pure devotion. Considered as an embodiment of his oral teaching to the Christians of the infant Church, they show how largely prayer entered into the services of the apostolic ministry.

"Whether his letters be long or short, argumentative or preceptive, he never finds prayer out of place. Not only does petition ordinarily open and close his epistles, but it is intermingled with the entire texture of them. Take, for example, his Epistle to the Romans, the opening prayer of which we have already noticed. Does he make allusion to God as the real though too often forgotten Creator of the universe? his soul is filled with adoration, and he cannot repress the vehement outburst, 'who is blessed forever. Amen.' Rom. i, 25. Is he speaking of the Incarnate Son of God? he stops to breathe his devout homage in the words, 'who is over all, God blessed forever. Amen.'" Rom. ix, 5. Has he brought the doctrinal argument of his epistle to a close? he does not enter on the practical improvement of it, until to the words, 'of him, and through him, and to him, are all things,' he has added, 'to whom be glory forever. Amen.' Rom. xi, 36. Does he recommend the strong to bear with the infirmities of the weak? he confirms his

precept by a prayer for their brotherly concord. Rom. xv, 5, 6. Does he allude to the spread of the Gospel's tidings among the Gentiles? he takes occasion to entreat that the joys of the Gospel may be abundantly experienced by the Christians of Rome. Rom. xv, 13. Does he make mention of his projected journeys? he prescribes the strain of supplication that he would have them present for the success of his work. Rom. xv, 30-32. Does he lay aside, or rather cause Tertius, his amanuensis, to lay aside the pen? it is not till he has inserted the petition, 'Now the God of peace be with you all. Amen.' Rom. xv, 33. Is the sheet resumed in order to add a list of salutations? they must end with the prayer, 'The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen.' Rom. xvi, 20. Has he still further to append the messages which his fellow-laborers desire to send? the benediction is again repeated. Rom. xvi, 24. Is the letter at length ready to be dispatched? the whole must be wound up with a doxology, 'to God only wise.' Rom. xvi, 27.

"In his other writings, also, Paul shows the same readiness to mount upward on the wings of devotion. His second letter to the Thessalonians contains a prayer in every chapter. And in the epistle to Philemon, which was simply a business letter, five verses out of the twenty-five make more or less reference to the errands which took him on his friend's behalf to the throne of the heavenly grace.

"Frequent as are the devotional expressions scattered throughout the apostle's writings, his petitions would after all have been but few had he offered

only those which he recorded, or had he offered prayers only when he recorded them. We are not left, however, to such a supposition. . Observe his repeated assurances: 'Without ceasing I make mention of you always in my prayers.' Rom. i, 9. 'I thank my God always on your behalf.' 1 Cor. i, 4. 'I cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers.' Eph. i, 16. 'Always in every prayer of mine for you all making request with joy.' Phil. i, 4. 'We give thanks to God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you.' Col. i, 3. 'Since the day we heard it, we do not cease to pray for you.' Col. i, 9. 'We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers; remembering without ceasing your work of faith.' 1 Thess. i, 2, 3. 'For this cause also thank we God without ceasing.' 1 Thess. ii, 13. 'Night and day praying exceedingly that we might see your face.' 1 Thess. iii, 10. 'We are bound to thank God always for you.' 2 Thess. i, 3, and ii, 13. 'Wherefore also we pray always for you.' 2 Thess. i, 11. 'I thank God that without ceasing, I have remembrance of thee in my prayers night and day.' 2 Tim. i, 3. 'I thank my God, making mention of thee always in my prayers.' Philem. 4. The man who could truthfully make these declarations was chargeable with no inconsistency when he recommended the duty of 'continuing instant in prayer.'"

But Paul's prayers are not more to be noted for their frequency and constancy than for their fervor and comprehensiveness. "With him, prayer was heart-work, (Rom. x, 1;) consequently the more he

engaged in it, the warmer became his spiritual desires, and the deeper his benevolent affections. He told the brethren at Thessalonica that he prayed for them 'exceedingly,' (1 Thess. iii, 10,) a very strong term, denotive of intense eagerness. He introduced his petitions for the Church at Philippi by the expression, 'How greatly I long after you all in the bowels of Jesus Christ.' Phil. i, 8. It was no mere desire that he felt; it amounted to a longing; not only so, but he longed after them 'greatly:' nay, further, he could say that he longed after them greatly 'with the tender affection of Jesus Christ.' This seems a bold expression, but it would be understood by those to whom he wrote. The infinite and illimitable love of the Son of God exceeded all human imitation, for it passed all human knowledge. As the Son of man, however, his life was a continuous manifestation of tenderness, benevolence, and sympathy. In these excellences he is to be followed; and the same mind must be in us which was found in Christ the Saviour. Paul richly partook of this spirit: so that, when desiring to testify the strength of his prayerful affection for the Philippian believers, he had no scruple in likening it to the compassion and ardent love which had shone forth in his Lord and Master. There was a resemblance in kind, though not in degree; in quality, though not in quantity.

"This assimilation to the temper of Jesus explains the fervency of Paul's intercessions. As the Redeemer 'in the days of his flesh offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears,' so the apostle in reference to his pleadings could write,

'I would that ye knew what great conflict I have for you.' Col. ii, 1. The literal term is 'agony'—allusion being made to the public games of Greece.

"Another evidence of Paul's earnestness is deducible from the fullness of expression which forms so marked a characteristic of his prayers. He supplicated for his believing brethren that they might 'abound in hope,' (Rom. xv, 13;) that their love might 'abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment,' (Phil. i, 9;) that they might 'abound in love toward all men,' (1 Thess. iii, 12;) that they might be 'filled with the fruits of righteousness,' (Phil. i, 11;) 'being fruitful in every good work,' (Col. i, 10;) stablished also 'in every good word and work,' (2 Thess. ii, 17;) yea, even 'made perfect in every good work,' (Heb. xiii, 21;) that they might be sanctified 'wholly,' their 'whole spirit and soul and body' being 'preserved blameless,' (1 Thess. v, 23,) so that they might be 'without offense,' (Phil. i, 10,) and 'unblamable in holiness.' 1 Thess. iii, 13. He prayed also that they might 'walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing,' (Col. i, 10;) that they might be 'strengthened with all might unto all patience and long-suffering,' (Col. i, 11;) that they might attain 'unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding,' (Col. ii, 2;) that God would 'fulfill' in them 'all the good pleasure of his goodness,' (2 Thess. i, 11;) that they might have 'peace always by all means,' (2 Thess. iii, 16;) that they might be 'filled with all joy and peace,' (Rom. xv, 13;) 'filled with all wisdom and spiritual understanding,' (Col. i, 9;) nay, even 'filled with all the fullness of God.' Eph. iii, 19.

Indeed, so far did he go in the exuberance of his holy desire, as to utter the seemingly self-contradictory request, that they might 'know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge.'" Eph. iii, 19.—*Preces Paulinæ.*

The instructiveness of the apostle's prayers as models for ministerial guidance, may be further seen in the numerous and appropriate subjects they embrace. They are no more limited to any narrow range of thought than to any fixed forms of expression. Beyond the ever appropriate topics of adoration and thanksgiving, they embody supplications for enemies, for benefactors, for fellow-countrymen, for the Gentiles, and for believers of various nations; for Christian unity, progress, assurance, joy, consistency, steadfastness, and holiness, and especially for ministerial success. Indeed, what subject connected with the kingdom of God on earth, or the destiny of the soul beyond the present life, is not comprehended within the apostle's supplications. In the light of such an example his charge to Timothy may be considered as equally addressed to every true minister of the Lord Jesus Christ. "I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; for kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth. I will therefore that men pray every-where, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting." 1 Tim. ii, 1-4, 8.

From the last verse quoted, it may be seen that ministers are not only to be men of prayer themselves, and competent to lead the devotions of others, but also that it is one of their responsible duties to promote the practice of prayer among those to whom they minister. Neither of these objects can they hope to attain unless they themselves become examples of what praying men should both be and do. Hence, their studies on this subject should not be limited to theory, but should tend to the practical result of developing within themselves habits of intimate communion with God, which shall make their whole lives an example to others, and their words when uttered in prayer, the source of edification to all who may worship with them. A consistent aim at results like these will tend to

2. CAREFUL AND PERSEVERING SELF-CULTIVATION IN REFERENCE TO THE SPIRIT AND GIFT OF PRAYER.

In all other matters the principle is conceded that excellence is attained by effort. In this, there is too great a tendency to omit effort altogether, and to form habits at random. This tendency is yielded to by some through a low conception of the importance of prayer, by others from certain prejudices or superstitious feelings against attempting to improve upon the spontaneous utterances of the heart and the lips. The two errors are kindred to each other, and closely allied to that spiritual indolence which paralyzes all progress in piety, and all endeavors to attain superiority in spiritual attainments. In this respect they are in contrast with the spirit of a zealous and

enlightened Christianity which aims in all things to attain a pre-eminence of goodness, coveting earnestly the best gifts, and striving diligently to secure them.

The example of the disciples in entreating the Lord Jesus Christ to teach them to pray, his ready response, his full instructions, and his repeated admonitions to watch as well as pray, not only encourage but enjoin earnest efforts at self-improvement in a service which must ever be regarded as an essential agency of the Christian life itself. Of every true Christian it may be said, that "Prayer is his vital breath, his native air,"

"His watchword at the gates of death ;
He enters heaven with prayer."

But to the minister of the Gospel it is even more. To him it is an agency for the edification and salvation of others. It is that by which he may lift whole multitudes into the spirit and act of divine communion, and by which he may bring down the blessing of Almighty God upon individuals, upon Churches, upon communities, and upon nations. For a man called of God to minister in the sanctuary to be indifferent to any means or effort by which he may increase his own spiritual power, and his capacity to lead those to whom he may minister more directly to the living fountains of the waters of life, or higher up the mount of God, should be regarded as unpardonable. No human language can fully set forth the responsibility of that phase of the duty of the Christian minister in which he is called to be the leader of the devotions of his fellow-worshippers in the house

of God. Not that he is charged with priestly functions or has any power of absolution. Nevertheless, in the sense in which every believer may offer spiritual sacrifices unto the Lord, it is his office and duty to speak in behalf of the people as well as of himself, in their united approaches to the throne of grace. A cold, an indifferent, a narrow, a formal, a trivial, or a heartless prayer from his lips, may chill the spiritual life of hundreds; whereas, a heart glowing with devotion, and lips touched with fire from the altar of God, may kindle within the same people the holiest emotions, the purest desires, and the most fervent aspirations. Even the utterance of a single low thought or coarse expression may mar the spiritual sacrifice, and in scores of minds break off the sympathetic chord by which their souls were being lifted to communion with the infinite and eternal source of blessings.

Let it not be for one moment thought that the self-cultivation recommended has reference to the mere attainment of rhetorical grace, or poetic beauty in diction. Adorned language in prayer unaccompanied by appropriate sentiments and feelings, might be as offensive to good taste as repulsive to him who would be mocked by its utterance. The cultivation urged is that of the heart, the mind, and the capacity and habit of pure and fitting devotional expression. As all true prayer is the language of the heart, so the heart of an officiating minister needs to be thoroughly imbued with the influence, the conception, and the bearing of religious truth. As no one can pray acceptably who does not believe that God

is, and that he "is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him," so the more thoroughly any one has acquired a spiritual acquaintance with the author of his being, and with the Lord Jesus Christ whom he hath sent, together with the knowledge of his own spiritual wants as representative of the wants of others, the more fittingly he may hope to express those wants by prayer and supplication to the hearer of prayer. It is not sufficient to say that a minister should seek to improve in piety, to grow in grace, and in the knowledge of the truth. He should seek enlarged knowledge and increased spiritual attainments with special reference to the high and solemn function of serving as a spokesman and intercessor with God in behalf of multitudes of his fellow-men. He should be able to rise above the conception of merely personal wants, and be able to embrace in his heart the condition, the necessities, the woes, and the soul-desires of "all classes and conditions of men."

No mere theorizing, any more than merely human sympathy, is adequate to this. There must be a positive personal acquaintance with the wretchedness and helplessness of man in his sinful condition, with some just ideas of the infinite love of God as manifested in the plan of salvation. The heart must be trained to feel the wants of others as experienced in the trials, the afflictions, and the temptations of actual life, and also in the light of revealed truth, and of the eternal world. The mind also must be accustomed to grasping, collating, and combining the truths of revelation, so as to be able to order fittingly before the Lord the cause of individuals and multitudes.

To do this appropriately will require habitual meditation upon the goodness, the long suffering, the tender mercy, and the multiplied blessings and favors of the Lord, as the subjects of praise and thanksgiving, also great familiarity with the promises and encouragements of God's word which may be plead in claim of his favor and benediction.

No one who is a stranger to such habits of mind, or to whom such thoughts are a burden, can be supposed to have the spirit of prayer. But when an ambassador of Christ is so deeply interested in the moral and spiritual welfare of those to whom he is sent as to dwell upon these themes, and to revolve them often and anxiously, both in his private solitudes, and devoutest yearnings before the throne of grace, he possesses a great and essential requisite for the offering of fervent and effectual prayer in the midst of a Christian congregation in which he will blend both arguments and entreaties in their behalf before the Lord.

Moreover, as the preacher of the Old Testament sought out acceptable words with which to address his fellow-men, how extremely fitting is it that he whose office it is to offer frequent prayers to God in behalf of himself and others should by all means seek to acquire the capacity and habit of using the most appropriate language.

The language appropriate to public prayer will never be stilted, affected, bombastic, or even florid. Neither will it be dry, frigid, or formal. On the other hand it will be simple, and yet elevated, pure, natural, significant, and fervent. Specially will it be scriptural in its tone and character, indicating

familiarity with the devotional language and spirit of the inspired writers.

In self-cultivation with reference to public prayer, beyond the generic ideas of feeling, thought, and language, several auxiliary ideas demand attention, such as arrangement, variety, and the manner of utterance. The two principles first named need to be happily blended. The human mind tires of sameness whether in thought or in the order of thought. Hence, he that for himself and others would have freedom and power in prayer, must accustom himself to "all prayer," that is, to that exhaustless variety of topics which are suitable for devotional consideration and expression. But while he takes care to avoid repetition, and to secure freshness of thought and language, he must also accustom himself to rightly arranging and proportioning his prayers. A prayer, no less than a sermon, should have a plan—its introduction, argument, and conclusion, and these should severally be changed in matter and form from service to service, yet not for change's sake so much, as to conform to the endless variety of human circumstances and experiences.

A conviction of the necessity of the great variety required in public prayer will tend to stimulate, not only the study of prayer, but prayer itself, for the gift of prayer, both of which will tend to the spiritual improvement of the leader, the edification of his fellow-worshippers, and the glory of God.

A similar conviction of the great responsibility of public prayer will also tend to promote habits of thoughtful preparation for the act. It is now generally

recognized as an essential duty of ministers to devote years of study to the task of general preparation for preaching the Gospel, and also days of special preparation for a single sermon to be addressed to their fellow-men. Is it not lamentable that the same persons, in many instances, give little or no thought to either kind of preparation for the solemn service of prayer to God in religious congregations. It is conceded that the lines of preparation for the two classes of duties are, to a large extent, parallel, and that he who is thoroughly furnished and qualified to rightly divide the word of truth, has gone a long way toward the preparation needed to enable him to make full proof of his ministry in leading the public prayers of his people. Nevertheless it is claimed that certainly, during the earlier periods of a minister's service, whatever be his general knowledge and experience, he should make special preparation for his public prayers on the Sabbath.

As in all such duties the spiritual idea should be foremost, so, undoubtedly, the first form of this preparation should be sought in that scriptural study, that self-examination, and those devout exercises heretofore recommended as helps to private prayer. To these may be added devotional composition. It is not recommended to compose prayers for the sake of memorizing or reciting them. If any are inclined to make such a use of what they write, they are advised to burn their manuscripts as soon as perfected, expecting to realize positive advantage from the act of composition itself. What all need is self-discipline in the use of well-chosen language, and a

capacity of expressing their devotional thoughts, emotions, and desires with definiteness, simplicity, and force. In all human experience nothing has been found more useful as a means of self-cultivation, both as to thought and style, than diligent practice with the pen. In this case it is peculiarly important as a means of securing an impartial and strict criticism which may be said to be essential to high improvement in a branch of effort from which, from the delicacy of the case, the criticisms of others are practically excluded. There is probably no better method of detecting in ourselves tendencies to incoherent or irrelevant thought, repetitions, trivial or overstrained expressions, and other faults which may mar our public prayers, than that of spreading out upon paper and critically considering detailed specimens of the language we actually employ in our addresses to the Divine Being. If we feel called upon to prune, purify, and strengthen our style with a view to making our speech acceptable to our fellow-men, why should we do less in reference to our utterances before our Maker and our Judge? Moreover, written composition may become to us a mental mirror in which we may discern with our own eyes the lineaments of our spiritual character, and our modes of thought, as well as our habits of language.

In the history of great and good ministers, instances have not been wanting in which careful and laborious preparation for the devotions of the pulpit have been followed by attainments of grace and power in prayer that have tended greatly to the spiritual profit of the Church, and to deep religious

impressions on the minds of the unawakened. Others by similar means may hope to attain similar results in their own experience.

Devotional composition for personal improvement is not limited to the writing of prayers. It may extend to meditations on portions of God's word, to private confessions of sins or heart-wanderings, to pious resolutions, and to vows of consecration. In whatever form it may be diligently prosecuted, whether as a means of actual worship or of religious self-cultivation, it can hardly fail to promote the higher qualification not only of Christian ministers to conduct the devotional services of the Sabbath and the sanctuary, but also of Christian people to participate in the same with edification.

3. A CAREFUL AVOIDANCE OF THE FAULTS OF PUBLIC PRAYER.

It is greatly to be regretted that so solemn and interesting a service should ever be marred with any form of imperfection, and yet the catalogue of serious faults that have sometimes found place in public prayer is neither brief nor edifying. As several of these have already been alluded to, it is to be hoped that a few additional suggestions may suffice to put the reader on his guard against whatever might offend the taste, wound the feelings, divert the attention, or depress the religious sentiments of worshippers, not now to speak of the sin of dishonoring God by any degree of impropriety or inadvertence in so responsible an act as that of worship.

1.) We should not introduce into public prayer

any thing which is not an appropriate part of prayer itself. Hence, didactic statements, narratives, descriptions, and discussions, should be excluded.

2.) Prayer to God should not contain indirect addresses to men, whether in the form of compliments, reproofs, appeals, or personalities.

3.) Addresses to the Divine Being should not be degraded by terms of familiarity, of amatory endearment, or even an irreverent use of the scriptural titles of the Deity.

4.) The Saviour himself warned his disciples against vain repetitions in prayer, and the spirit of his warning applies to the too frequent introduction even of the sacred names of God as well as unmeaning interjections of all kinds.

5.) The Saviour also reprobated long prayers.

Prolixity may be caused by inattention, by repetition, by formality, by languor, and in many other ways; but however caused, it is a weariness to men, and not promotive of the honor of God. It is to be avoided by means of spiritual earnestness, concentration of thought, and a proper distribution of subjects.

6.) All forms of bad vocal utterance are serious faults in public prayer. He who would lead in an edifying manner the devotions of a congregation should not smother his voice in whispers, nor confuse it with indistinct articulation. Neither should he pervert it into drawling and objectionable tones, nor shock his fellow-worshippers with boisterousness. He should cultivate purity, depth, tenderness, and strength of voice, with the capacity of blending every degree

of every good vocal quality in the instant and perfect expression of the most delicate, devout, and exalted sentiments and emotions of prayerful hearts. When such a result is attained, it is safe to advise the practice of perfect naturalness ; but to whatever extent bad vocal habits may have become natural, we should strive earnestly to correct them, and make our voices subsidiary to the divine glory as well in prayer as in praise.

4. HABITS OF ADAPTATION TO ALL VARIETIES OF SUBJECTS AND CIRCUMSTANCES.

Perhaps nothing is more essential to acceptable worship than exact truthfulness. This implies the expression of our precise wants and feelings in any and all of the varying circumstances of life. This principle of itself makes evident the inadequacy of written forms of prayer except for special services, and those peculiar occasions in which general expressions sufficiently set forth the proper subjects of supplication. To be limited, however, to generalities, is to fail of exact truthfulness by falling below the whole truth, and often that part of it which is most important as specially applicable to persons present and interests involved. He, therefore, who would appropriately lead the prayers of a congregation, must be an attentive observer of events as well as of the characters and experiences of those to whom he ministers. Has sickness invaded some families, and death bereaved others ; has any public calamity startled the community ; has a great man fallen in the Church or in the nation ; has the Spirit of God been

poured out in answer to prayer ; have the careless been awakened ; have souls been converted ; has any thing occurred that might suggest appropriate topics of prayer or even of allusion in address to the great Disposer of human events ; the mind of the minister should be quick to discern any or all such topics, and thoughtful to present them in the right connection and in fitting language. Such characteristics tend to make prayer real, not merely to the officiating minister, but to all those with whom and for whom he prays, since they are able to feel its propriety, and to enter into its spirit as well as its form.

5. THAT DIVINE AID BY WHICH HUMAN INFIRMITIES
ARE HELPED, AND ACCESS SECURED TO THE
SOURCE OF BLESSINGS.

Here is our great and final source of help. While it would be presumption to expect aid from on high if indulging in indolent inaction ourselves, and while we may often be made conscious that our best efforts are, of themselves, insufficient to attain the results we desire, yet we may be always comforted by the assurance that God's abounding grace is pledged in many forms to aid us in all that belongs to sincere and earnest worship.

As public prayer is a peculiarly high and responsible duty, and one in which every true minister ought specially to feel his need of the divine assistance, it is well to consider in what ways, and to what extent, he is authorized to expect help from God. Consulting the Scriptures, we are not left to doubt that the hearer of prayer is also the inspirer of prayer. From him

all good thoughts and pure desires proceed. While "the word of God is not bound," or limited to any class or condition of men, it is nevertheless peculiarly rich, and full of encouragement to those who have special need of grace to help them in peculiar duties, no less than in peculiar trials.

A minister of the Gospel, therefore, who is charged with the duty of offering supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanks for all men, and who is duly conscious of his own weakness and infirmities, may (1.) Consider himself entitled to all those general promises of help with which it has pleased God to encourage his servants through the inspired word.

"Our soul waiteth for the Lord: he is our help and our shield." *Psa. xxxiii, 20.*

"O Israel, trust thou in the Lord: he is their help and their shield. O house of Aaron, trust in the Lord: he is their help and their shield. Ye that fear the Lord, trust in the Lord: he is their help and their shield." *Psa. cxv, 9-11.*

"I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help. My help cometh from the Lord, which made heaven and earth." *Psa. cxxi, 1, 2.*

"He hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper." *Heb. xiii, 6.*

(2.) He may hope to be aided in his preparations for prayer. Apart from sin, one of the greatest of all hinderances to prayer is spiritual barrenness—a heart cold, languid, and emotionless, with reference to God and the interests of immortal souls. As

against this evil of the natural heart, which all worldly interests tend perpetually to renew, God alone is our refuge and defense. But in condescension to human weakness and infirmity, he has provided to extend to those who seek it the aid they most of all need—the preparation of the heart.

“Lord, thou hast heard the desire of the humble : thou wilt prepare their heart, thou wilt cause thine ear to hear,” *Psa. x, 17.*

“O Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel, our fathers, keep this forever in the imagination of the thoughts of the heart of thy people, and prepare their heart unto thee.” *1 Chron. xxix, 18.*

“The preparations of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue, is from the Lord.” *Prov. xvi, 1.*

In view of such assurances, and of still greater encouragements connected with the priesthood and intercession of the Lord Jesus Christ, all ministers may, in reference to heart preparation for public prayer, confidently adopt the language and practice of the apostle :—

“Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.” *Heb. iv, 16.*

(3.) Those who offer public prayer may not only ask and expect to receive wisdom for the right conception of the topics, matter, and the order of prayer, but also aid in the use of appropriate language.

In the days of Job it was understood that “the Spirit of the Almighty giveth understanding,” and by an apostle we are expressly taught :—

“If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God,

that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him." James i, 5.

Also the prayers of the Psalmist are equally appropriate to the Christian :—

"Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength, and my Redeemer." *Psa. xix, 14.*

"O Lord, open thou my lips; and my mouth shall show forth thy praise." *Psa. li, 15.*

It is the office of divine grace to establish and confirm us in good words as well as in good works, and there are few if any experiences of devout Christians in which they are often and better assured of help from the Lord than in the thoughts, desires, and words with which the Holy Spirit aids them in prayer.

(4.) The influence of the Holy Spirit is specially promised for this species of help :—

"Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints, according to the will of God." *Rom. viii, 26, 27.*

Hence the necessity of "Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints;" and also of "praying in the Holy Ghost." *Eph. vi, 18; Jude 20.*

(5.) The grace of access to the source of blessings is also a divine bestowment which the minister should

seek for himself and others, through the name and mediation of the Lord Jesus Christ:—

“By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.” Rom. v, 2.

“For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father.” Eph. iii, 18.

“In whom we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of him.” Eph. iii, 12.

“Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, and the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me. I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture.” John xiv, 6; x, 9.

“Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the vail, that is to say, his flesh; and having a high priest over the house of God; let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith.” Heb. x, 19–22.

(6.) Faith in prayer is a gift of unspeakable importance. Whatsoever is not of faith is sin, and prayer without faith is mockery. Public prayer should by eminence be the prayer of faith, both on the part of him who conducts it, and of all who join in it. But faith whether to one or many “is the gift of God,” first, in the bestowment of the faculty of faith, and second, in strengthening its right exercise. While Christians now have urgent need to pray as did the apostles, “Lord, increase our faith,” yet every assembly for prayer may be considered an occasion

of special advantage wherein the righteousness of God may be "revealed from faith to faith." This passage of Scripture seems to indicate the cumulative power of faith, in accordance with which a company of believers striving together in one spirit and with one mind may hope to attain great mutual blessings, and also the highest assurance of faith itself. It is thus that Christians may "through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith." Thus also may they help each other by prayer one for another, that for the gifts bestowed by the means of many persons, thanks may be given by many on their behalf. Even the Apostle Paul could say, "For I know that this shall turn to my salvation through your prayer, and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ." Phil. i, 19.

In this manner, while a minister may secure blessings upon his people in answer to prayer, he may also expect to be strengthened in his own faith, and aided in every phase of his proper work by their prayers in his behalf. "The Lord send thee help from the sanctuary, and strengthen thee out of Zion," was a prayer of David which should be often and fervently offered both by Christian ministers, and people in behalf of each other.

(7.) The example of the Apostle Paul in enlisting the prayers of believers in behalf of himself and his work, is instructive to Christian ministers:—

"Now I beseech you, brethren, for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake, and for the love of the Spirit, that ye strive together with me in your prayers to God for me." Rom. xv, 30.

"Praying always with all prayer ; . . . and for me, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in bonds ; that therein I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak." Eph. vi, 18-20.

"Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving ; withal praying also for us, that God would open unto us a door of utterance, to speak the mystery of Christ, for which I am also in bonds : that I may make it manifest, as I ought to speak." Col. iv, 2-6.

"Brethren, pray for us." 1 Thess. v, 25.

"Finally, brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may have free course, and be glorified." 2 Thess. iii, 1.

Whoever as a minister of the sanctuary is, in addition to his own faithful diligence, thus sustained by the prayers of the Church, may hope to experience an ever-increasing nearness to the throne of grace, and a corresponding increase of power both with God and with men.

C.—For Attending Worshipers.

If the position of individual worshipers in Christian congregations is not so responsible as that of officiating ministers, it is nevertheless intrinsically important. In the presence of a multitude, individuals sometimes fall into the delusion of supposing that their personal responsibility is lost, or merged in that of the mass. The truth is, that while personal responsibility can never be lost or diminished,

it is practically heightened by the circumstances of public worship in proportion to the sacredness and peculiar privileges of the sanctuary, and the supporting presence of a praying and witnessing Church. The God who sees in secret, and who knows the thoughts afar off, is not less attentive to the thoughts, purposes, and acts of individuals when in the place where, in a peculiar sense, "his honor dwelleth." Whoever, therefore, would rightly "Come and appear before God," whoever would fitly in the house of God join in the voice of praise and prayer with a congregation of worshipers, should make:—

1. ANTECEDENT PREPARATION.—As remarked in reference to ministerial duty, so this preparation is to be eminently that of the heart. It is to be in accordance with the Scripture precepts, "Prepare your hearts unto the Lord, and serve him only." 1 Sam. vii, 3. "If thou prepare thine heart, and stretch out thine hands toward him; . . . then shalt thou lift up thy face without spot; yea, thou shalt be steadfast, and shalt not fear." Job xi, 13, 15. The danger of not preparing our hearts unto the Lord is illustrated in the sad example of Rehoboam: "And he did evil, because he prepared not his heart to seek the Lord." 2 Chron. xii, 14.

Appropriate means for such preparation are meditation, prayer, and the reading of the Scriptures. To these may be added special consideration of our own wants, and those of our families, our friends, our neighbors, the community around us, and of the Church of God at home and abroad.

The morning of the Lord's day should be an

occasion of special preparation for the worship of the sanctuary. Whatever tendency the cares, toils, or perplexities of the week may have had to disturb the spirit or secularize the feelings, should be counteracted by the rest which the Sabbath brings, and by those special engagements of private and social worship which befit the earlier hours of the holy day. Thus persons should go to the house of the Lord in the spirit of worship, and not preoccupied with careless indifference or idle curiosity.

On entering the place of worship they should say to themselves, "This is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven." Gen. xxviii, 17. How appropriate at such a moment to bow down with reverence, and invoke the divine favor in a brief initial act of worship introductory to the services that are to follow.

2. PERSONAL INTEREST in the acts and objects of public worship is essential to any individual who would profit by them. Without it no one can be a real worshiper. Although the Sabbath is a day for bodily rest, and for quietude of mind and heart, yet it brings no apology for spiritual indolence or sluggishness. Specially, therefore, on entering the house of worship, is it appropriate not only to endeavor to concentrate our attention upon religious truth and duty, but to pray in the language of the Psalmist:—

"Quicken me, O Lord, according unto thy word. Accept, I beseech thee, the freewill offerings of my mouth, O Lord, and teach me thy judgments." Psa. cxix, 107, 108.

“Quicken us, and we will call upon thy name.”
Psa. lxxx, 18.

Corresponding to such prayers the individual worshiper should endeavor to maintain a spirit of earnest thoughtfulness in reference to the privileges and responsibilities of the hour, and by all appropriate means to realize the divine presence and love.

3. ACTUAL PARTICIPATION in the prayers of the congregation as offered by the presiding minister, is another essential element of duty as well as of advantage to the worshiper. This is something more than mere assent, something more than a verbal repetition of the words uttered, which are both in themselves helpful. It is a mental appropriation of the sentiments expressed. It is a sustained effort of the moral and spiritual nature to act in unison with other hearts, and in harmony with the divine will for its own elevation, purification, and receptivity of divine influence. From this primary and essential experience, the heart of the believer should rise to the function of an actor amid the great agencies of salvation. In prayer as in outward effort, it is permitted to mortals to become co-workers with God. It is his to bestow blessings upon us and others, but it is ours to ask, that we may receive, and to pray, that others may receive. Conformably to this appointment, the divine bestowments are often proportioned according to our faith in asking. Herein consists another peculiar responsibility of the Christian, that of acting in concert with the agencies appointed by divine wisdom for the renovation of human hearts, and the recovery of the world from sin to holiness.

In union with God and men lies his strength for achieving, or helping to achieve, results which would be utterly beyond his power of accomplishing alone. Listless indifference wastes that strength; or forfeits the privilege of using it; whereas, earnest endeavor and humble spiritual striving wield it for the accomplishment of the grandest issues, and bring the soul of the believer into co-activity with the moral and spiritual forces of earth and heaven.

It may here be remarked that individual worshipers are not wholly dependent upon the guidance of a presiding minister. While it is their privilege to follow him when he leads them upward and heavenward, and to join in all pure and hallowing acts of devotion, yet should he wander into irrelevant thoughts, or indulge in unfitting words, it is nevertheless their privilege to have their minds stayed on God, trusting in him. It may be a sore trial, but they should ask and expect grace to bear it. Besides those formal acts of worship which demand universal attention, there are intermediate moments spent in the sanctuary in which, by mental prayer, a heart fixed on sacred objects and yearning with holy desire, may enter into intimate and exalted communion with God. Thus, in a high sabbatic sense, the individual worshiper may fulfill the command, "Pray without ceasing, and in every thing give thanks."

4. A MAINTAINED SPIRIT OF DIVINE HELP IN THE SANCTUARY.

Spiritually as well as physically, men are affected by the atmosphere they breathe. When the majority, not to say the entire membership, of a Christian con-

gregation, cultivate and maintain that pure spiritual earnestness which is appropriate to the Sabbath and the sanctuary, to acts of prayer and praise, how heavenly is the atmosphere that pervades the assembly! How invigorating to the soul, how inspiring to faith, how strengthening to hope! In such an assembly each one may derive help from the sympathy and the faith of others around him, while he also may do his share toward strengthening and encouraging them. Thus mutual help may be given and received in acts of associated worship.

But the highest and best assistance of all comes from on high in those various forms of blessing which may be summarily called:—

5. THE DIVINE BENEDICTIONS.—God is a very present help in his own sanctuary. Hence, every sincere worshiper may, in the urgency of his spirit, say with David:—

“O God, thou art my help.” *Psa. lxx, 5.*

“I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help. My help cometh from the Lord, which made heaven and earth.” *Psa. cxxi, 1, 2.*

“Our help is in the name of the Lord, who made heaven and earth.” *Psa. cxxiv, 8.*

The word of God abounds with promises and encouragements, the significance of which is heightened by his promised presence in the sanctuary. One of the sacred forms in which he was anciently addressed was, “O thou that inhabitest the praises of Israel.” *Psa. xxii, 3.* Corresponding to the idea of the temple being God’s dwelling-place, were the triumphant exclamations of the prophets:—

“Cry out and shout, thou inhabitant of Zion: for great is the Holy One of Israel in the midst of thee.” Isa. xii, 6.

“Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion: for, lo, I come, and I will dwell in the midst of thee, saith the Lord.” Zech. ii, 10.

When to the idea of God’s peculiar presence in his temple is added that of his peculiar nearness to spiritual worshipers, we have that which may encourage every sincere heart to trust in him, and to claim all the blessings of his manifested presence:

“The Lord is nigh unto all them that call upon him, to all that call upon him in truth. He will fulfill the desire of them that fear him: he also will hear their cry, and will save them.” Ps. cxlv, 18, 19.

“Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you.” James iv, 8.

When each individual of a worshiping assembly enters believingly into the fullness of his personal and public privileges, how unspeakable are the benefits which in common with others he may enjoy! Well may any one of the number say, “How precious are thy thoughts (or favors) unto me, O God! how great is the sum of them!” Ps. cxxxix, 17.

In fact, under the Christian dispensation all the peculiar blessings and influences of the Holy Ghost are to be expected and attained while waiting upon God in his sanctuary. Of these may be mentioned:—

1. The new birth:—

“Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That

which is born of the flesh is flesh ; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again." John iii, 5-7.

"Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call." Acts ii, 38, 39.

"Whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world : and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." 1 John v, 4.

Whether we consider the absolute necessity of the new birth, or its glorious consequences as set forth in the Scriptures, the greatness of the privilege of prayer for its realization becomes apparent. David appreciated it even under the old dispensation when he prayed :—

"Create in me a clean heart, O God ; and renew a right spirit within me." Psal. li, 10.

Ezekiel portrayed it in prophetic promises relating to the new dispensation :—

"I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within you ; and I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and will give them a heart of flesh : that they may walk in my statutes, and keep mine ordinances, and do them : and they shall be my people, and I will be their God." Ezek. xi, 19, 20.

"A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you : and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of

flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them." Ezek. xxxvi, 26, 27.

These promises, and others like them, were realized under the preaching of the Gospel as declared by the apostles of our Lord:—

"As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." John i, 12, 13.

"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." 2 Cor. v, 17.

"For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature." Gal. vi, 15.

"Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God: and every one that loveth him that begat, loveth him also that is begotten of him." 1 John v, 1.

Hence the exhortation: "Be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God." Rom. xii, 2.

Not only is it the privilege of awakened persons to pray for this great gift of the divine renewal, but to expect to receive it in the sanctuary:—

"And of Zion it shall be said, This and that man was born in her: and the Highest himself shall establish her. The Lord shall count, when he writeth up

the people, that this man was born there. Selah.”
Psa. lxxxvii, 5, 6.

2. *Spiritual life.*

Whosoever is born unto the kingdom of God's dear Son, receives the gift of a new life, even “The spirit of life in Christ Jesus, which makes him free from the law of sin and death.” In the enjoyment of this life the Apostle Paul could say :—

“I am crucified with Christ : nevertheless I live ; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me : and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.” Gal. ii, 20.

But the spiritual life not only needs to be received as a divine gift, but to be sustained and supported by the Giver of life. The office of Christ to supply life to the souls of men, is set forth in that striking figure of speech in which he describes himself as the bread of life :—

“My Father giveth you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world. Then said they unto him, Lord, evermore give us this bread. And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life : he that cometh to me shall never hunger ; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst. Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life. I am that bread of life. Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead. This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die. I am the living bread which came down from heaven : if any

man eat of this bread, he shall live forever : and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world." John vi, 32-35, 47-51.

In the light of such declarations, various passages of Scripture may be seen to have a spiritual significance not always attached to them. For instance, the familiar petition of the Lord's Prayer, "Give us this day our daily bread." To a mind spiritually enlightened, this petition means more than food for the body—it signifies that, indeed, as a necessity of our earthly life, and also daily food for the soul, even that "hidden manna" which is given them to eat, who have Christ formed within them the hope of glory.

In like manner the fourth beatitude, "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness : for they shall be filled," indicates those deep spiritual necessities of the human soul which can only be satisfied by the indwelling presence of him whose name is "The Lord our Righteousness." Jer. xxiii, 6.

The word of God is specially adapted to satisfy the hunger of the soul. Hence, Christ declared, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." But the essence and life-inspiring center of God's word is Christ himself. On this account he says, "Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life : and they are they which testify of me." John also testifies of him, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. In him was life ; and the life was the light of men." Hence, as the services of God's house are

appointed for the double purpose of instruction in the word of life, that is, of preaching Christ, and of prayer for the gift of spiritual life, it is specially appropriate for the members of assembled Christian congregations unitedly and believingly to pray as did the disciples, "Lord, evermore give us this bread."

When in answer to prayer Christ is manifested to believers as being in them the hope of glory, (Col. xi, 27,) they may also expect to receive his promised gift of—

3. *The Holy Ghost as an indwelling Comforter.*

How exceedingly rich are the promises of Christ to bestow the gift of the Spirit on his worshipping disciples:—

"I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever; even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you. It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you. But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me. When he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will show you things to come. He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you." See John xiv, xv, xvi.

The first great fulfillment of these promises was on the occasion of the Pentecost in immediate sequence of the united and persevering prayers of the Church. The peculiar circumstances of that event show that it was designed to be not only glorious in itself, but specially instructive to the future Church as to its privileges and the mode of attaining them. The subsequent teaching and writings of the apostles also prove that those privileges were diligently urged upon the attention of believers :—

“Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John : who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost.” Acts viii, 14, 15.

“And Ananias went his way, and entered into the house ; and putting his hands on him, said, Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost. Then had the churches rest throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria, and were edified ; and walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, were multiplied.” Acts ix, 17, 31.

“While Peter yet spake (at Cesarea) these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word. And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost. For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God. Then answered Peter,

Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we?" Acts x, 44-47.

Besides repeated references in the Acts of the Apostles to this experience, we find corresponding and multiplied allusions to it in the Epistles, of which a few examples are subjoined:—

"The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us." Rom. v, 5.

"So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God. But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you. Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh. For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." Rom. viii, 8-14.

"The kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." Rom. xiv, 17.

"Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost." Rom. xv, 13.

"Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and

that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are." 1 Cor. iii, 16, 17.

"Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you?" 1 Cor. vi, 19.

"But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life." Jude 20, 21.

4. The Fruits and Witness of the Holy Spirit.

Not merely for their comfort and joy is the Holy Ghost imparted to believers, but that fruit may be borne in their lives and conversation. The Lord Jesus said:—

"I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit. Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples." John xv, 1, 2, 8.

The apostle explained with great definiteness the nature of that fruit which Christians are required to bear through the aid of the Holy Ghost given unto them:—

"The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit." Gal. v, 22-25.

"The fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth." Eph. v, 9.

Among the blessed fruits of the Spirit for which Christians are especially to pray is the witness of their adoption into the household of God, the citizenship of the saints, and the heirship of eternal glory:—

"Ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God." Rom. viii, 15, 16.

"By one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified. Whereof the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us." Heb. x, 14, 15.

"It is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth. He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself." John v, 8, 10.

5. *Divine Light.*

In the darkness of this world how cheering are the divine promises of light as well as life to the souls of believers, and how appropriate is it to seek that light when praying to God in his sanctuary:—

"For ye were sometime darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light; wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light." Eph. v, 8, 14.

"God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." 2 Cor. iv, 6.

“But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.”
1 Pet. ii, 9.

“Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness.”
1 Thess. v, 5.

“But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.”
1 John i, 7.

6. *Heavenly Love.*

As God is love, and whosoever dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and as it is the privilege of Christians to become partakers of the divine nature, so it is eminently appropriate for them when in God's house to pray for special manifestations of that grace which will enable them to love God with all their hearts, and each other with pure hearts fervently. Exceeding great and precious are the promises which encourage such prayers, and the confident expectation of their answer when offered in godly sincerity:—

“As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love. If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love.” John xv, 9, 10.

“Grace be to you, and peace, from God our Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath

blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love." Eph. i, 2-4.

"For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, that he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man; that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fullness of God." Eph. iii, 14-19.

"Speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: from whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love." Eph. iv, 15, 16.

"The Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all men, even as we do toward you: to the end he may stablish your hearts unblamable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints." 1 Thess. iii, 12, 13.

"We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that

loveth not his brother abideth in death." 1 John iii, 14.

"By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments : and his commandments are not grievous." 1 John v, 2, 3.

7. The Earnest of Eternal Glory.

The significance of the spiritual blessings provided for by the covenant of grace is greatly increased by the fact that over and beyond their great intrinsic value, certain of them become a sacred and Divine pledge of still greater blessings which God hath prepared for them that love him. Of this class is that peculiar blessing which the Apostle Paul denominates the Spirit's sealing, and also the earnest of the Spirit :—

"Now he which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God ; who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts." 2 Cor. i, 21, 22.

"Now he that hath wrought us for the self-same thing is God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit." 2 Cor. v, 5.

"That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ. In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation : in whom also, after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory." Eph. i, 12-14.

As among the Jews "first fruits" were regarded as an earnest or pledge of a coming harvest, and as among all nations the custom of sealing renders binding a promise or a pledge, so in the Christian life that divine sequence of faith by which believers are "sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise" becomes an earnest of the heavenly inheritance, an assuring pledge of the everlasting joy that awaits the saved of the Lord in the presence of their glorified Redeemer.

Indeed, all these manifestations of grace are to be sought by prayer not only in private but in public assemblies, as so many helps from God by which we may worship him more acceptably, and be more fully prepared for that joyful and glorious entrance which shall be ministered unto the righteous in the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Since, therefore, God's house is specially appointed to be a house of prayer in which all the kindreds of the earth may wait upon him to find strength for their weakness, grace and truth for their enlightenment, pardon for their sins, joy for their sorrow, and salvation for their souls, how incumbent is it on each and all to profit by its privileges to their fullest extent. Thus may they honor him who heareth prayer, and secure from him the priceless blessings he delights to bestow upon his earthly children preparatory to their admission to the tabernacle of God, not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

FORMS OF PRAYER

FOR

Children and Youth, Adult Christians,

AND

• FAMILIES.



TO THE READER.

IT is believed that a frequent perusal of the following forms of prayer, whether as a help to devotional thought and language, or as the actual expression of the heart and lips while waiting upon God, cannot fail to be profitable. Out of many such compositions, these have been selected for their intrinsic excellence and a suitable variety.

While it is impossible to designate the authorship in all cases, it will be interesting to many to know that the two series of private prayers, (1.) For children and youth ; (2.) For adult Christians, the questions for self-examination, and the family prayers for the first week, were written by the Rev. John Wesley. Of these prayers, in reference to their character and style, a recent writer has justly said : " For reverential feeling, simplicity, and beauty of expression, scriptural sentiment, Christian benevolence, and earnest

longings for the highest holiness . . . they have no superiors, perhaps hardly any equals, in the English language."

The prayers arranged for the second and third weeks, and most of the occasional prayers, are from an official publication of the Wesleyan Methodist Church of Great Britain, entitled, "Prayers for Christian Families." Those for the fourth week are of various authorship, for the most part not definitely known.

In all cases, abridgment to the prescribed limit of brevity, and adaptation of phraseology to the times and circumstances in which the present volume is issued, have been freely practiced by the compiler.

As a help to acquiring the habit of freedom in extemporaneous prayer, it is recommended to all who may use the appended forms devotionally to add sentences and paragraphs specially occurring to their own minds. To encourage this practice, topics not alluded to in the particular prayer are in some instances inserted suggestively in brackets.

PRIVATE DEVOTION.

MORNING AND EVENING PRAYERS FOR LITTLE CHILDREN.

First Series.

Morning.

As now I waken from my sleep,
I thank the Lord who did me keep
Through all last night ; and to him pray
That he will bless me all this day.

Evening.

As now I lay me down to sleep,
I pray the Lord my soul to keep ;
And if I die before I wake,
I pray the Lord my soul to take ;
And this I ask for Jesus' sake.

Second Series.

Morning.

Blessed Saviour, thou hast kept
Thy little child while *he* has slept :
Be thou with me through this day,
While I work and while I play.

Give me, Lord, a humble mind,
Always gentle, patient, kind ;
Teach me how to help mamma,
And to honor dear papa.

Let me live as in thy sight,
Speak the truth, and do the right ;
And may others always see
A happy Christian child in me.
Grant this for Jesus' sake. Amen.

Evening.

The daylight fades,
The evening shades
Are gathering round my head.
Father above,
I praise that love
Which smoothes and guards my bed.

While thou art near,
I need not fear
The gloom of midnight hour :
Blest Jesus, still
From every ill
Defend me with thy power.

Pardon my sin,
And enter in
And sanctify my heart :
Spirit divine,
O make me thine,
And ne'er from me depart

Third Series.

Morning.

I thank thee, O God my Maker, that thou hast kept me alive and well while I slept. Be near to me and bless me all this day. Help me to honor my father and my mother, [to be kind to my brothers and sisters,] and to do to all persons as I would be done unto. May I love thee with all my heart, and though a little child, may I come to the Lord Jesus Christ as my Saviour, and be prepared to live and reign with him forever. Amen.

Evening.

O Lord God, thou seest me by night as well as by day. I pray thee for Christ's sake to forgive whatever I have done wrong to-day, and keep me safe all night while I am asleep. Bless all my dear friends, [here the child may mention father, mother, and other relatives,] do them good at all times, and may we all be happy and useful while we live and dwell in heaven together after death. Hear me, O Lord, for the sake of Jesus Christ thy Son. Amen.

Fourth Series.

ON GOING TO SUNDAY-SCHOOL.

O Lord, this is thy day. May I think right thoughts, and do only right things every moment. Go with me to my class in the Sunday-school, and help me to be good, to become wiser and better from all that I see and hear. May I delight to sing the praises of Jesus, my Saviour, and be made ready to live with him in heaven forever. Amen.

ON RETURNING FROM SUNDAY-SCHOOL.

I thank thee, O Lord my God, for this holy day. I bless thee that I was not born in a heathen land, but in a land of Sabbaths and of Bibles. I thank thee that, although in a Christian land, I have not been left, like many children, to wander about and play, and break the holy Sabbath. I bless thee for kind parents and friends who send me to the Sunday-school, and teach me out of God's holy book.

May I remember the words of truth which I have learned, and be better and happier all this week for what I have learned to-day. Bless my parents and teachers, O Lord, and may we all meet in heaven when we die. All this I ask for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.

PRAYERS FOR CHILDREN AND
YOUTH,
FOR EACH MORNING AND EVENING OF THE WEEK.

INTRODUCTORY ADDRESS.

"MY DEAR CHILD :—A lover of your soul has here drawn up a few prayers in order to assist you in this great duty. Be sure that you do not omit, at least morning and evening, to present yourself upon your knees before God. You have mercies to pray for, and blessings to praise God for. But take care that you do not mock God, drawing near with your lips, while your heart is far from him. God sees you, and knows your thoughts ; therefore, see that you not only speak with your lips, but pray with your heart. And that you may not ask in vain, see that you forsake sin, and make it your endeavor to do what God has shown you ought ; because God says, 'The prayers of the wicked are an abomination unto the Lord.' Ask then of God for the blessings you want, in the name, and for the sake, of Jesus Christ, and God will hear and answer you, and do more for you than you can either ask or think.

"JOHN WESLEY."

Sunday Morning.

This is thy day: O Lord, enable me to rejoice and be glad in it. May I ever remember to keep it holy, not doing my own works, nor finding my own pleasure, nor speaking my own words; but so delight in thee, that thou mayest give me my heart's desire. Bless to me thy word, O my heavenly Father, and all the means of grace, that I may not use them in vain or to my own hurt, but for the instructing of my mind, the reforming of my life, and the saving of my soul. Save me from all hardness of heart and contempt of thy word; increase my love to it, and enable me to hear it meekly, and to receive it with pure affection, and to bring forth fruit unto good living. Open my understanding to receive thy truth in the love thereof. Set it so powerfully upon my heart, and root it so deep in my soul, that the fruits thereof may be seen in my life, to thy glory and praise. May I always so hear, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest thy word, that it may be a savor of life to my soul. O let me not offer vain oblations unto the Lord, drawing nigh with my lips, while my heart is far from thee. But do thou enable me to worship thee with holy worship, with joy and delight, with profit and pleasure. O Lord, hear my prayers, and let my cry come unto thee. Do more and better for me than I can either desire or deserve, for the sake of my blessed Saviour and Redeemer, Jesus Christ; to whom, with thee and the Holy Ghost, be all praise and glory, now and forever. Amen.

"Our Father who art in heaven," etc.

Sunday Evening.

Merciful God, permit me to pay thee now my evening sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving. Thou hast dealt graciously with me, O Lord God, and hast been exceedingly good and kind to me, beyond all that I had reason to expect or am able to express. I bless thee, O Lord, for every help which I enjoy to the promoting of my present and eternal good. I desire to ascribe all praise and glory to thee, to whom alone it is due. O Lord, I bless thee that thy house is open to me, the bread of life offered me, the word of salvation preached, and thy Spirit striving with me. O suffer me not to receive thy grace in vain, nor let thy word be lost upon me. Do thou apply it to my heart, and fix it in my memory, that it may prove a blessing to my soul. Be thou pleased to second every word of instruction that I have received with the power of thy grace and Holy Spirit. Above all, O blessed God, do thou give me a heart filled with thy love, and lifted up in thy praise, and devoted to thy honor and glory, all the days of my life. Take me, O Lord God, my Saviour, into thy gracious care and protection. Preserve me from all dangers in the night-season. Let me lie down and sleep in thy arms; and when the trumpet shall sound, and at last call me from the sleep of death, let me be caught up into the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so for ever be with the Lord. All these mercies, O my God, I most humbly ask, for the alone sake of Jesus Christ my Redeemer. Amen.

“Our Father who art in heaven,” etc.

Monday Morning.

O Lord God Almighty, Father of angels and men, I praise and bless thy holy name for all thy goodness and loving-kindness to me and all mankind. I bless thee for my creation, preservation, and all the blessings of this life ; but above all, for thy great love in the redemption of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ. I bless thee for preserving me in the night past, and bringing me safe to the beginning of a new day. Defend me in the same with thy mighty power, and grant that this day I fall into no sin, neither run into any kind of danger ; but let all my doings be so ordered by thy governance that I may do always that which is righteous in thy sight, through Jesus Christ my Redeemer. Grant me such grace, that I may be able to withstand the temptations of the world, the flesh, and the devil, and with a pure heart and mind to follow the steps of my gracious Redeemer.

[Parents—Relatives—Teachers.]

Keep me, I beseech thee, O Lord, from all things hurtful to my soul or body, and grant me thy pardon and peace, that, being cleansed from all my sins, I may serve thee with a quiet mind, bring forth plenteously the fruit of good works, and continue in the same unto my life's end, through Jesus Christ, my Saviour and Redeemer. Amen.

“Our Father who art in heaven,” etc.

Monday Evening.

Almighty God, who art the gracious Preserver of all mankind, I desire now to offer unto thee my praise and thanksgivings for all the blessings thou hast this day bestowed upon me. I confess, O my God, that I am unworthy of the least of all thy mercies; for I have gone astray like a lost sheep. I have followed too much the devices and desires of my own heart. I have offended against thy holy laws. I have left undone those things which I ought to have done, and have done those things which I ought not to have done; and there is no health in me. But thou, O Lord, have mercy upon me, a miserable offender. Spare me, O Lord, who now confess my faults unto thee. Enable me to bewail my manifold sins and offenses, which I have from time to time most grievously committed, by thought, word, and deed, and against thy Divine Majesty. Have mercy upon me, have mercy upon me, most merciful Father; for my Saviour Jesus Christ's sake, forgive me all that is past, and grant me thy grace, that I may ever hereafter serve and please thee, in newness of life, to the honor and glory of thy name, through Jesus Christ, my Lord and Saviour. Take me under thy gracious care and keeping this night; save and defend me from all dangers. Grant unto my body rest in my bed, and unto my soul rest in thyself; and be thou my God and my guide, my hope and my help, my joy and my comfort, now and for evermore, through Jesus Christ my Redeemer. Amen.

“Our Father who art in heaven,” etc.

Tuesday Morning.

O thou Father of all mercies, and God of all goodness, I praise and bless thy name for thy mercies and favors unto me in the night past, and for bringing me safe to behold the light of a new day. Send down thy heavenly grace into my soul, that I may be enabled to worship thee and serve thee as I ought to do. Enable me to believe in thee, to fear thee, and to love thee with all my heart, and mind, and soul, and strength ; that I may honor thy holy name and word, and serve thee truly this and all the days of my life. Give me thy grace, that I may love all mankind as myself, and do unto all as I would they should do unto me. Enable me to love and honor my parents, obey my superiors, and submit to all my teachers. Suffer me not to hurt any body by word or deed. Make me just and honest in all my dealings. Let me not bear any malice or hatred in my heart. Keep my heart from covetousness, my tongue from evil-speaking, lying, and slandering ; and my body in temperance, soberness, and chastity.

[*My Playmates—Schoolmates.*]

Now, Lord, be pleased to help me so to pass through things temporal, that I may not finally lose the things which are eternal, but at last be received into thy presence, where is fullness of joy, and be seated at thy right hand, where are pleasures for evermore, through Jesus Christ my Saviour. Amen.

“Our Father who art in heaven,” etc.

Tuesday Evening.

O Lord God, the gracious Giver of all good things, I praise and adore thee for thy goodness, which has been so plentiful toward me, an unworthy child of man. Thou hast in thy mercy not only preserved me this day from all dangers, but bestowed upon me all things needful, for which I desire to praise thy fatherly goodness, and with angels^s and archangels, and all the company of heaven, to laud and magnify thy holy name. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me bless his holy name; for the Lord is gracious, and his mercy is everlasting toward them that fear him. And now, Lord, I most humbly implore thy fatherly goodness to forgive whatever has this day, in my heart or life, offended the eyes of thy glory. O Lamb of God, son of the Father, that takest away the sins of the world, receive my prayer.

Aid me, O Lord, in all my doings for the time to come, and further me with thy continual help, that in all my thoughts, words, and works, I may glorify thy holy name. And now, O Lord, I desire to commit myself to thy protection. O watch over me for good. Preserve me from all terrors and dangers in the night. Remove my sin out of thy sight, and show me the light of thy countenance, and refresh me with the sense of thy favor, through Jesus Christ my Redeemer; to whom, with thee and the Holy Ghost, be all honor and praise for ever and ever. Amen.

“Our Father who art in heaven,” etc.

Wednesday Morning.

O Lord God Almighty, Fountain of all goodness, and Father of all mercies, I desire again to bow my knee before thy holy Majesty, humbly beseeching thee to accept my praise and thanksgivings for thy mercies to me in the night season. I laid me down and slept, and rose up again in safety ; for it was thou only, O Lord, that sustainedst me.

And now look upon me, O Lord, in thy rich mercy, and, for thy dear Son's sake, be gracious unto my soul. Lighten my darkness, I beseech thee, O Lord, and let the day-spring from on high visit me. Enable me to cast away all the works of darkness, and to put upon me the armor of light, that I may be able to renounce the world, the flesh, and the devil ; to keep thy holy will and commandments, and to walk in the same all the days of my life.

Give me, O Lord, wisdom to know the things that belong to my peace, before I go hence and am no more seen. Graft in my heart the love of thy name, increase in me true religion, and nourish me with all goodness. Give me the spirit to think and do always such things as are right. Teach me to ask and seek only such things as shall please thee and profit my soul. Let thy grace always prevent and follow me, that I may be continually given to all good works, and may always glorify my Father which is in heaven. These, and all other blessings, for myself, and for thy whole Church, I humbly beg in the name, and for the sake of the merits, of Jesus Christ.

“ Our Father who art in heaven,” etc.

Wednesday Evening.

O God, the Creator and Preserver of all mankind, I most humbly beseech thee now to accept my sincere praise and thanksgiving for all the blessings and mercies that I have enjoyed this day.

Thou alone, O Lord, hast preserved me from dangers ; and from thy gracious bounty have I received all things needful to promote my present and eternal happiness. Not unto me, O Lord, not unto me, but unto thy name be the praise. O Lord, I am unworthy, through my manifold sins, to offer thee any sacrifice ; yet, as thy property is to have mercy and to forgive, I beseech thee to accept this my bounden duty ; not dealing with me according to my deserving, but after thy mercy, and the merits of thy dear Son Jesus Christ. Grant me, O my God, grace, that I may love what thou hast commanded, and earnestly desire what thou hast promised. Enable me, amid the many changes of this world, to fix my heart constantly upon things above. May I, both in heart and mind, constantly ascend, whither my Saviour Jesus Christ is gone before to prepare a place for me. Bring me up, O Lord, in thy fear and love. Keep me under the protection of thy good providence.

Into thy hands, O my God, I this night commend my soul and body. Give thy angels charge over me, and grant me such rest and sleep as may fit me for the duties of to-morrow. And, O my God, do thou prepare me for my departure from this life to dwell with thee forever.

“ Our Father who art in heaven,” etc.

Thursday Morning.

O thou eternal Fountain of all wisdom, whom I cannot see or know but by the means of thy own light, vouchsafe to manifest thyself to my soul, and teach me to know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent. O blessed Sun of righteousness, arise upon me with healing in thy wings, to scatter all the clouds of folly and ignorance that overspread my soul. Open my eyes to see the wondrous things thy love has wrought. Suffer me not to remain in darkness concerning any thing that is needful for me to know in order to my present peace and my eternal glory. O Lord, incline mine ears to wisdom, and my heart to understanding, that I may follow on to know the Lord, and increase in the knowledge and love of God. Give me, O Lord, that highest learning, to know thee; and that best wisdom, to know myself. Command a blessing on my studies and endeavors; and bless me, and help me in learning such things as shall do me good. Let my soul and body, and all their powers, be under thy conduct, and employed to thy glory. Show me thy ways, O Lord, and lead me into truth. Vouchsafe, O Lord, to keep me this day from all sin. Bless my going out and coming in, now and for evermore.

[My Parents—Brothers—Sisters.]

“Our Father, who art in heaven,” etc.

Thursday Evening.

O my heavenly Father, I have been preserved by thee ever since I was born. Go not from me in my youth, but send thy light and thy truth to my heart, that they may lead me. Teach me thy way, O Lord, and enable me to walk in thy truth. O knit my heart unto thee, that I may fear thy name ; and give me understanding in the way of godliness. Lord, I am young, and cannot discern between good and evil : O let me not go out of the way of thy commandments. Teach me true understanding and knowledge. Teach me to do the thing that pleaseth thee ; for thou art my God. Let thy loving Spirit lead me forth into all the paths of righteousness. Let my study day and night be in thy word, that I may become wise unto salvation. Make thy word a light unto my feet, and a lamp to my path ; guide me here with thy counsel, and afterward receive me into glory.

Withdraw not thy mercy from me, O my God, but let thy loving-kindness and thy truth always preserve me. As thou hast been pleased to preserve me this day, and hast bestowed upon me all things needful, I desire to bless thy name for the same. Take care of me this night, O Lord, and visit me with thy mercies. Preserve me, O Lord, from every thing hurtful, and let thy merciful arms forever surround me, through Jesus Christ my Saviour.

[Companions—Friends—Teachers.]

“Our Father who art in heaven,” etc.

Friday Morning.

O Lord my God, I am taught by thy word that I am by nature born in sin, a child of wrath, and that except I am born again I cannot see the kingdom of God. O Lord, do thou teach me the meaning of the new birth, that I may become a child of grace.

Lord, take away the vail from my heart, that I may form some just idea of my sinful nature. Make the remembrance of my sins grievous unto me, and the burden of them intolerable. Lead me to the fountain opened for sin and uncleanness, that I may there wash and be cleansed. Suffer me not to rest till I find redemption in thy blood, even the forgiveness of all my sins. It has pleased thee, O Lord, to hide these things from the wise and prudent and to reveal them unto babes. Reveal then, O Lord, thy love in my soul. Let me taste and see how good and gracious thou art. Suffer me to come unto thee and forbid me not. I am unworthy; but receive me into thy arms, and adopt me thine forever. Shed abroad in my heart thy love, and fill me with all peace and joy in the Holy Ghost.

[*The Poor—The Sick—Heathen Children.*]

Be thou with me, O Lord, this day, to bless and keep, guide and govern me, and let me be thine, and thine only, forever.

“Our Father who art in heaven,” etc.

Friday Evening.

O thou ever-blessed God, the Author and Giver of life, I desire with all humility to draw near unto thy gracious majesty, to offer up unto thee my evening sacrifice of prayer and praise. Thou alone, O God, art worthy to be praised, and to be had in everlasting remembrance. Glory be to thee, O most adorable Lord God. Glory be to thy name for all thy mercies and goodness bestowed on me, thy most unworthy servant in the day that is now past. Give me a due sense of all thy mercies, that my heart may be unfeignedly thankful, and grant me thy grace, that I may show forth thy praise not only with my lips but in my life. Have mercy upon me, O God, after thy great goodness. According to the multitude of thy mercies, do away mine offenses. Wash me thoroughly from my wickedness, and cleanse me from all my sins. Turn thy face from my sins, and put out all my misdeeds. Create in me a clean heart, O my God, and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from thy presence, neither withdraw thy loving-kindness from me. Enable me so to live that I may not only be looking, but also longing, for my Saviour's appearing ; that when he shall come, I may also appear with him in glory. And now, O Lord my God, I beseech thee, take me under thy protection this night, and preserve me from all evil. I will lay me down in peace and take my rest ; for it is thou, Lord, only that makest me dwell in safety. In thee have I trusted, let me never be confounded.

“Our Father who art in heaven,” etc.

Saturday Morning.

Almighty and everlasting God, I bless thee that of thy infinite goodness thou hast preserved me during the night past, and brought me in safety to this morning. According to thy mercy, look upon me, O Lord, for thy goodness. Make me to remember thee in the days of my youth. O teach me true wisdom, and let the law of thy mouth be dearer to me than thousands of gold and silver, and let my whole delight be therein. O let me be devoted to thee from my childhood. Keep out of my heart all love of the world, or riches, or any other created thing, and fill it with the love of God. Thou knowest how many and powerful are the enemies of my soul that seek to destroy it. O Lord, help; O Lord, save; O Lord, deliver me from them. Give me grace to renounce the world, the flesh, and the devil, and to keep thy holy will and commandments all the days of my life. Show me and make me what I must be before I can inherit thy kingdom. Teach me the truth as it is in Jesus. Save me from my own will, and let thine be done in me and by me. O make me thy child by adoption and grace. Renew me daily with thy Holy Spirit, and guide me in all my ways, till thou hast perfected me for thy heavenly kingdom. Make me dutiful to my parents, affectionate to my relatives, obedient to my superiors, and loving toward all mankind. And grant that as I grow in stature I may grow in wisdom and in thy favor, till thou shalt take me to thine everlasting kingdom.

“Our Father who art in heaven,” etc.

Saturday Evening.

I desire to offer unto thee, O Lord, my evening sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving for all thy mercies bestowed upon me. I bless thee for my creation, preservation, and, above all, for my redemption by our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. I bless thee for bringing me safely to the close of this day, and humbly implore the pardon of all the sins I have been guilty of, whether in thought, word, or deed. O thou blessed Guide of my youth, give me thy grace to seek after thee in my early years, that thou mayst not be unmindful of me in the time of age. Keep me from the evil of the world, and carry me safe through it to thy kingdom. Take care of me, and provide for me, and dispose of me in the world as shall be most for thy glory and my good. Leave me not to myself, in the hands of my own counsel, but let me be taught of God. Take thou, O Lord, the gracious charge, and guidance, and government of me, and fix in my heart thy fear and love, and direct all my ways to please not myself but thee. O redeem me from the power of my sins by thy grace, and from the punishment of them by thy blood, and by both bring me to thy glory. I desire, O my God, to give up myself wholly to thee. I would be thine, and only thine, forever. Let me be entirely devoted unto thee, and do thou make me obedient and faithful unto the end. Make me to remember thee in my bed, and think upon thee when I am waking.

“Our Father who art in heaven,” etc.

SELF-EXAMINATION.

Questions for any Morning.

1. Has God been in all my thoughts since I last retired to rest?

2. Have I remembered him on my bed, and meditated on him in the night watches?

3. Has my meditation of him been sweet while I have communed with him in mine own heart, and while my spirit has made diligent search as to my character and motives?

4. Do I love to meditate on his law day and night?

5. Are his testimonies my delight?

6. What has been the current of my desires?

7. What new purposes of good have I formed?

8. Have I a present consciousness of the indwelling spirit of adoption whereby I can claim God as my Father?

9. Does the Holy Spirit bear witness with my spirit that I am a child of God?

10. Do I possess, and is it my constant aim to illustrate, the mind that was also in Christ?

11. Of what things have I most urgent need at this hour of prayer?

For any Evening.

1. With what degree of attention and fervor did I use my morning prayers, public or private?

2. Have I done any thing without a present, or at

least a previous perception of its direct or remote tendency to the glory of God?

3. Did I in the morning consider what particular virtue I was to exercise, and what business I had to do, in the day?

4. Have I been zealous to undertake, and active in doing, what good I could?

5. Have I interested myself any further in the affairs of others than charity required?

6. Have I, before I visited or was visited, considered how I might thereby give or receive improvement?

7. Have I mentioned any failing or fault of any person when it was not necessary for the good of another?

8. Have I unnecessarily grieved any one by word or deed?

9. Have I before or in every action considered how it might be a means of good to myself or others?

Relating to the Love of God.

1. Have I set apart some time this day to think upon God's perfections and mercies?

2. Have I labored to make this day a day of religious profit, sacred to the love of Christ, keeping his commandments?

3. Have I employed those parts of it in works of necessity and mercy, which were not employed in prayer, reading, and meditation?

Relating to the Love of my Neighbor.

1. Have I thought any thing but my conscience too dear to part with to please or serve my neighbor?
2. Have I rejoiced or grieved with him?
3. Have I received his infirmities with pity, not with anger?
4. Have I contradicted any one, either where I had no good end in view, or where there was no probability of convincing?
5. Have I let him I thought in the wrong (in great things or small) have the last word?

Relating to Humility.

1. Have I labored to conform all my thoughts, words, and actions to these fundamental maxims: "Of myself I am nothing, I have nothing, I can do nothing?"
2. Have I set apart some time this day to think upon my infirmities, follies, and sins?
3. Have I ascribed to myself any part of any good which God did by my hand?
4. Have I said or done any thing with a view to the praise of men?
5. Have I desired the praise of men?
6. Have I taken pleasure in it?
7. Have I commended myself, or others, to their faces, unless for God's sake, and then with fear and trembling?
8. Have I despised any one's advice?
9. Have I when I thought so said, "I am in the wrong?"

10. Have I received contempt for things indifferent, with meekness? for doing my duty with joy?

11. Have I omitted justifying myself where the glory of God was not concerned? Have I submitted to be thought in the wrong?

12. Have I, when contemned, First, prayed God it might not discourage or puff me up; Secondly, that it might not be imputed to the contemner; Thirdly, that it might heal my pride?

13. Have I, without some particular good in view, mentioned the contempt I met with?

Relating to Self-Denial.

1. Have I done any thing merely because it was pleasing?

2. Have I not only not done what passion solicited me to, but done just the contrary?

3. Have I received the inconveniences I could not avoid as means of self-mortification chosen for me by God?

4. Have I contrived pretenses to avoid self-denial? In particular,

5. Have I thought any occasion of denying myself too small to be embraced, or too great to be encountered?

6. Have I submitted my will to the will of every one that opposed it, except where the glory of God was concerned?

Relating to Resignation and Meekness.

1. Have I endeavored to will what God wills, and that only?

2. Have I received every thing that has befallen me without my choice, as the choice of Infinite Wisdom and goodness for me, with thanks ?

3. Have I (after doing what he requires of me to do concerning them) left all future things absolutely to God's disposal ; that is, have I labored to be wholly indifferent to whichsoever way he shall ordain for me ?

4. Have I resumed my claim to my body, soul, friends, fame, or fortune, which I have made over to God ; or repented of my gift, when God accepted any of them at my hands ?

5. Have I endeavored to be cheerful, mild, and courteous in whatever I said or did ?

6. Have I said any thing with a stern look, accent, or gesture, particularly with regard to religion ?

Relating to Thankfulness.

1. Have I allotted some time for thanking God for the blessings of the past week ?

2. Have I, in order to be the more sensible of them, seriously and deliberately considered the several circumstances that attended them ?

3. Have I considered each of them as an obligation to greater love, and, consequently, to stricter holiness ?

4. Have I shown my thankfulness by diligent efforts to honor God with my substance, my words, and my deeds ?

Relating to Growth in Grace.

1. Am I continually aspiring after the mind that was also in Christ?

2. That I may daily grow in grace, am I daily studious and prayerful that I may also grow in the knowledge of God and his truth?

3. Do I remember that the Saviour prayed for his disciples, "Sanctify them through thy truth, thy word is truth?"

4. Do I also pray for an increase of faith, knowing that according to my faith it shall be unto me?

5. Do I illustrate my faith and my love for my blessed Saviour by keeping all his commandments?

6. Have I victory over temptation?

7. Have I the indwelling witness of the Holy Spirit bearing witness with my spirit that I am a child of God?

8. Does this witness grow clearer, stronger, and dearer every day?

MORNING AND EVENING PRAYERS FOR ADULTS

Sunday Morning.

ALMIGHTY GOD, Father of all mercies, I, thy unworthy servant, desire to present myself, with all humility, before thee, to offer my morning sacrifice of love and thanksgiving. Glory be to thee, O most adorable Father, who, after thou hadst finished the work of creation, enteredst into thy eternal rest. Glory be to thee, O holy Jesus, who having, through the eternal Spirit, offered thyself a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice for the sins of the whole world, didst rise again the third day from the dead, and hadst all power given thee both in heaven and on earth. Glory be to thee, O blessed Spirit, who, proceeding from the Father and the Son, didst come down in fiery tongues on the apostles on the first day of the week, and didst enable them to preach the glad tidings of salvation to a sinful world, and hast ever since been moving on the faces of men's souls, as thou didst once on the face of the great deep, bringing them out of that dark chaos in which they were involved. Glory be to thee, O holy, undivided Trinity, for jointly concurring in the great work of our redemption, and restoring us again to the glorious liberty of the sons of God. Glory be to thee, who, in compassion to human weakness, hast appointed a solemn day for the remembrance of thy

inestimable benefits. O let me ever esteem it my privilege and happiness to have a day set apart for the concerns of my soul, a day free from distractions, disengaged from the world, wherein I have nothing to do but to praise and love thee. O let it ever be to me a day sacred to divine love, a day of heavenly rest and refreshment.

Let thy Holy Spirit, who, on the first day of the week, descended in miraculous gifts on thy apostles, descend on me thy unworthy servant, that I may be always "in the spirit on the Lord's day." Let his blessed inspiration prevent and assist me in all the duties of this thy sacred day, that my wandering thoughts may all be fixed on thee, my tumultuous affections composed, and my flat and cold desires quickened into fervent longings and thirstings after thee. O let me join in the prayers and praises of thy Church with ardent and heavenly affection, hear thy word with earnest attention and a fixed resolution to obey it. And when I approach thy altar, pour into my heart humility, faith, hope, love, and all those holy dispositions which become the solemn remembrance of a crucified Saviour. Let me employ this whole day to the ends for which it was ordained, in works of necessity and mercy, in prayer, praise, and meditation.

[Names of particular persons.]

Show mercy, O Lord, to my father and mother, my brothers and sisters, to all my friends.

"Our Father which art in heaven," etc.

Sunday Evening.

O my Father, my God, I am in thy hand ; may I rejoice above all things in being so. Do with me what seemeth good in thy sight ; only let me love thee with all my mind, soul, and strength.

O my Father, my God, deliver me, I beseech thee, from all violent passions : I know how greatly obstructive these are both of the knowledge and love of thee. O let none of them find a way into my heart, but let me ever possess my soul in meekness. O my God, I desire to fear them more than death ; let me not serve these cruel tyrants, but do thou reign in my breast ; let me ever be thy servant, and love thee with all my heart.

Deliver me, O God, from too intense an application to even necessary business. I know how this dissipates my thoughts, and impairs that lively perception I would ever retain of thee standing at my right hand. I know the narrowness of my heart, and that an eager attention to earthly things leaves it no room for the things of heaven. O teach me to go through all my employments with so truly disengaged a heart, that I may still see thee in all things, and see thee therein as continually looking upon me, and searching my reins ; and that I may never impair that liberty of spirit which is necessary for the love of thee.

Deliver me, O God, from a slothful mind, from all lukewarmness, and all dejection of spirit. I know these cannot but deaden my love to thee ; mercifully free my heart from them, and give me a lively, zealous, active, and cheerful spirit ; that I may vigorously

perform whatever thou commandest, thankfully suffer whatever thou choosest for me, and be ever ardent to obey in all things thy holy love.

Deliver me, O God, from all idolatrous love of any creature. Above all, deliver me, O my God, from all idolatrous self-love. O let thy almighty arm so stablish, strengthen, and settle me, that thou mayest ever be the ground and pillar of all my love.

By this love of thee, my God, may my soul be fixed against its natural inconstancy ; by this may it be reduced to an entire indifference as to all things else, and simply desire what is pleasing in thy sight. May this holy flame ever warm my breast, that I may serve thee with all my might ; and let it consume in my heart all selfish desires, that I may in all things regard, not myself, but thee.

Change the hearts of mine enemies. and give me grace to forgive them, even as thou for Christ's sake forgivest me.

[Preaching—Sunday-school Instruction.]

O thou Shepherd of Israel, vouchsafe to receive me this night and ever into thy protection ; accept my poor services, and pardon the sinfulness of these and all my holy duties. O let it be thy good pleasure shortly to put a period to sin and misery, to infirmity and death, and to hasten thy kingdom ; that all that wait for thy salvation may eternally love and praise thee, O God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, throughout all ages, world without end.

“Our Father which art in heaven,” etc.

Monday Morning.

O God, who art the giver of all good gifts, I, thy unworthy servant, desire to praise thy name for all the expressions of thy goodness toward me. Blessed be thy love for giving thy Son to die for my sins, for the means of grace, and for the hope of glory. .

O thou, who art good and doest good, who extendest thy loving-kindness to all mankind, the work of thine hands, thine image, capable of knowing and loving thee eternally : suffer me to exclude none, O Lord, from my charity, who are the objects of thy mercy ; but let me treat all my neighbors with that tender love which is due to thy servants and to thy children. Thou hast required this mark of my love to thee : O let no temptation expose me to ingratitude, or make me forfeit thy loving-kindness, which is better than life itself. But grant that I may assist all my brethren with my prayers, where I cannot reach them with actual services. Make me zealous to embrace all occasions that may administer to their happiness, by assisting the needy, protecting the oppressed, instructing the ignorant, confirming the wavering, exhorting the good, and reproving the wicked. Let me look upon the failings of my neighbor as if they were my own ; that I may be grieved for them, that I may never reveal them but when charity requires, and then with tenderness and compassion. Let thy love to me, O blessed Saviour, be the pattern of my love to him. Thou thoughtest nothing too dear to part with to rescue me from eternal misery : O let me think nothing too dear to part with to set forward

the everlasting good of my fellow-Christians. They are members of thy body; therefore I will cherish them. Thou hast redeemed them with an inestimable price; assisted by thy Holy Spirit, therefore, may I endeavor to recover them from a state of destruction; that thus adorning thy holy Gospel, by doing good according to my power, may I at last be received into the endearments of thy eternal love, and sing everlasting praise unto the Lamb that was slain and sitteth on the throne forever.

Extend, I humbly beseech thee, thy mercy to all men, and let them become thy faithful servants. Let all Christians live up to the claims of the holy religion they profess.

[*Missions to the Heathen.*]

Preserve my parents, my brothers and sisters, my friends and relations, and all mankind, in their souls and bodies. Forgive mine enemies, and in thy due time make them kindly affected toward me. Have mercy on all who are "afflicted in mind, body, or estate; give them patience under their sufferings, and a happy issue out of all their afflictions." O grant that I, with those who are already crucified with Christ, may together partake of a joyful resurrection, through him who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Ghost, one God, world without end.

Monday Evening.

Most great and glorious Lord God, I desire to prostrate myself before thy Divine Majesty, under a deep sense of my unworthiness : and with sorrow, and shame, and confusion of face, to confess I have, by my manifold transgressions, deserved thy severest visitations. "Father, I have sinned against heaven, and am no more worthy to be called thy son ;" O let thy paternal bowels yearn upon me, and for Jesus Christ's sake graciously receive me. Accept my imperfect repentance, and send thy Spirit of adoption into my heart, that I may again be owned by thee, call thee Father, and share in the blessings of thy children.

O my God, fill my soul with so entire a love of thee that I may love nothing but for thy sake, and in subordination to thy love. Give me grace to study thy knowledge daily, that the more I know thee, the more I may love thee. Create in me a zealous obedience to all thy commands, a cheerful patience under all thy chastisements, and a thankful resignation to all thy disposals. May I ever have solemn thoughts of thee ; never mention thy venerable name, unless on just, solemn, and devout occasions ; nor even then, without acts of adoration. O let it be the one business of my life to glorify thee, by every thought of my heart, by every word of my tongue, by every work of my hand ; by professing thy truth, even to the death, if it should please thee to call me to it ; and by engaging all men, as far as in me lies, to glorify and love thee.

Let thy unwearied and tender love to me make

my love unwearied and tender to my neighbor. May I be zealous to pray for, and to procure and promote, his health and safety, ease and happiness ; and active to comfort, succor, and relieve all whom thy love and their own necessities recommend to my charity. Make me peaceful and reconcilable ; easy to forgive, and glad to return good for evil. Make me like thyself, all kindness and benignity, all goodness and gentleness, all meekness and longsuffering. And, O thou Lover of souls, raise in me a compassionate zeal to save the life, the eternal life, of souls ; and by affectionate and seasonable advice, exhortations and reproof, to reclaim the wicked, and win them to thy love.

Be pleased, O Lord, to take me, with my father and mother, brethren and sisters, my friends and relations, and my enemies, into thy almighty protection this night. Refresh me with such comfortable rest that I may rise more fit for thy service. Let me lie down with holy thoughts of thee, and when I awake let me be still present with thee.

Show mercy to the whole world, O Father of all ; let the gospel of thy Son run and be glorified throughout all the earth. Let it be made known to all infidels, and obeyed by all Christians. Give to all schools and colleges thy blessing. Visit in mercy all the children of affliction, especially (—,) relieve their necessities, lighten their burdens ; give them cheerful submission to thy gracious will, and at length bring them and us to the joy of our Lord ; to whom with thee, O Father, and thee, O Holy Ghost, be all praise, now and forever. Amen.

Tuesday Morning.

O eternal and merciful Father, I give thee humble thanks (increase my thankfulness I beseech thee) for all the blessings, spiritual and temporal, which, in the riches of thy mercy, thou hast poured down upon me. Lord, let me not live but to love thee, and to glorify thy name. Particularly I give thee unfeigned thanks for preserving me from my birth to this moment, and for bringing me safe to the beginning of this day, (—) in which I beseech thee that all my thoughts, words, and works may tend to thy glory. Heal, O Father of mercies, all my infirmities, (—) strengthen me against all my follies : forgive me all my sins, (—) and let them not cry louder in thine ears for vengeance, than my prayers for mercy and forgiveness.

O blessed Lord, command what thou wilt, and enable me to fulfill thy commands. O thou Saviour of all that trust in thee, do with me what seemeth best in thine own eyes ; *only give me the mind which was in thee : let me learn of thee to be meek and lowly. Pour into me the whole spirit of humility : fill, I beseech thee, every part of my soul with it, and make it the constant, ruling habit of my mind, that all my other tempers may arise from it ; that I may have no thoughts, no desires, no designs, but such as are the fruit of a lowly spirit. Grant that I may think of myself as I ought to think, that I may "know myself, even as I am known." Herein may I exercise continually, when I lie down and when I rise up, that I may always appear poor, and little, and vile

in mine own eyes. O convince me that "I have neither learned wisdom, nor have the knowledge of the holy." Give me a lively sense that I am nothing, that I have nothing, and that of myself I can do nothing. Enable me to feel that I am all ignorance and error, weakness and uncleanness, sin and misery ; that I am not worthy of the air I breathe, the earth I tread upon, or the sun that shines upon me. And let me be fully content should all other men think of me as I do of myself. O save me from either desiring or seeking the honor that cometh of men. Convince me that the words of praise "when smoother than oil," then especially "are very swords." Give me to dread them more than the "poison of asps," or "the pestilence that walketh in darkness." And when these cords of pride, these snares of death, do overtake me, suffer me not to take any pleasure in them, but enable me instantly to flee unto thee, O Lord, and to complain unto my God. Let all my bones cry out, "Thou art worthy to be praised ; so shall I be safe from mine enemies."

Bless, O gracious Father, all the nations whom thou hast placed upon the earth with the knowledge of thee, the only true God ; but especially bless thy Church, and fill it with truth and grace ; where it is corrupt, purge it ; where it is in error, rectify it ; where it is right, confirm it ; where it is divided and rent asunder, heal the breaches thereof, O thou Holy One of Israel, and thus make it a praise and a power in the earth ; for the sake of Christ my blessed Redeemer. Amen.

Tuesday Evening.

I desire to offer unto thee, O Lord, my evening sacrifice—the sacrifice of a contrite spirit. “Have mercy upon me, O God, after thy great goodness, and after the multitude of thy mercies do away mine offenses.”

O Lamb of God, who, both by example and precept, didst instruct men to be meek and humble, give me grace throughout my whole life, in every thought, and word, and work, to imitate thy meekness and humility. O mortify in me the whole body of pride. Grant, O Lord, that I may go through all the scenes of life looking wholly unto thee, and acting wholly for thee. Let me never speak any word that may tend to my own praise, unless the good of my neighbor require it: and even then let me beware, lest, to heal another, I wound my own soul. Let my ears and my heart be ever shut to the praise that cometh from men, and let me “refuse to hear the voice of the charmer, charm he never so sweetly.” Give me a dread of applause, in whatsoever form, and from whatsoever tongue it cometh. I know that “many stronger men have been slain by it,” and that it “leadeth to the chambers of death.” O deliver my soul from this snare of hell; neither let me spread it for the feet of others. Whosoever perish thereby, be their blood upon their own head, and let not my hand be upon them.

O thou Giver of every good and perfect gift, if at any time thou pleasest to work by my hand, teach me to discern what is my own from what is another's,

and to render unto thee the things that are thine. As all the good that is done on earth thou doest thyself, let me ever return to thee all the glory. Let me, as a pure crystal, transmit all the light thou pourest upon me ; but never claim as my own what is thy sole property.

O thou who wert despised and rejected of men, when I am slighted by my friends, disdained by my superiors, overborne or ridiculed by my equals, or contemptuously treated by my inferiors, let me cry out with thy holy martyr, (Ignatius,) "It is now that I begin to be a disciple of Christ." Then let me thankfully accept, and faithfully use, the happy occasion of improving in thy meek and lowly spirit. If for thy sake "men cast out my name as evil," let me "rejoice and be exceeding glad." If for my own infirmities, yet let me acknowledge thy goodness, in giving me this medicine to heal my pride and vanity, and beg thy mercy for those physicians of my soul by whose hands it is administered to me.

Bless all my kindred, especially my father and mother, my brothers and sisters, and all my friends and benefactors (——.) Turn the hearts of my enemies ; (——) forgive them and me all our sins, and grant that we, and all the members of thy holy Church, may find mercy in the dreadful day of judgment, through the mediation and satisfaction of thy blessed Son Jesus Christ. Amen.

Wednesday Morning.

O thou who dwellest in the light which no man can approach, in whose presence there is no night, in the light of whose countenance there is perpetual day: I, thy sinful servant, whom thou hast preserved this night, who live by thy power this day, bless and glorify thee for the defense of thy almighty providence, (—) and humbly pray thee, that this, and all my days, may be wholly devoted to thy service. Send thy Holy Spirit to be the guide of all my ways, and the sanctifier of my soul and body. Save, defend, and build me up in thy fear and love; give unto me the light of thy countenance, peace from heaven, and the salvation of my soul in the day of the Lord Jesus.

O thou whose whole life did cry aloud, "Father, not mine, but thy will be done," give me grace to walk after thy pattern, to tread in thy steps. Give me grace to "take up my cross daily," to inure myself to bear hardship.

O thou who didst not please thyself, although for thy "pleasure all things are and were created," let some portion of thy Spirit descend on me, that I may "deny myself and follow thee." Strengthen my soul, that I may be temperate in all things; that I may never use any of thy creatures but in order to some end thou commandest me to pursue, and in that measure and manner which most conduces to it. Let me never gratify any desire which has not thee for its ultimate object. Let me ever abstain from all pleasures which do not prepare me for taking pleasure in

thee ; as knowing that all such war against the soul, and tend to alienate it from thee. O save me from ever indulging either "the desire of the flesh, the desire of the eye, or the pride of life." Set a watch, O Lord, over my senses and appetites, my passions and understanding, that I may resolutely deny them every gratification which has no tendency to thy glory. O train me up in this good way, "that when I am old I may not depart from it ;" that I may be at length of a truly mortified heart, "crucified unto the world, and the world crucified unto me."

With a propitious eye, O gracious Lord, behold all my enemies, and all that are in affliction ; give them patience under their sufferings, and grant that they, and all the members of thy Church, may find rest, "where the wicked cease from troubling," and mercy in the great day of trial. In particular I commend to thy mercy, my father and mother, my brethren and sisters, my friends and relations (——.) Lord, thou best knowest all their wants ; O suit thy blessings to their several necessities.

[The Christian Church—Ministers—Missionaries.]

Let these my prayers, O Lord, find access to the throne of grace, through the Son of thy love, Jesus Christ, the righteous ; to whom, with thee, O Father, in the unity of the Spirit, be all love and obedience now and forever. Amen.

Wednesday Evening.

"My Lord and my God," I know that unless I am planted together with thee in the likeness of thy death, I cannot share the likeness of thy resurrection. O strengthen me, that by "denying myself and taking up my cross daily" I may crucify the old man, and utterly destroy the whole body of sin. Give me grace to "mortify all my members which are upon earth," all my works and affections which are according to corrupt nature. Let me be dead unto sin, unto every transgression of thy law, which is holy, merciful, and perfect. Let me be dead unto the world, and all that is in the world, "the desire of the flesh, the desire of the eye, and the pride of life." Let me be dead unto pleasure, so far as it tendeth not to thee and to those pleasures which are at thy right hand for evermore. Let me be dead unto my own will, and alive only unto thine. I am not my own; thou hast "bought me with a price," with the price of thine own blood. And thou didst therefore die for all, "that we should not henceforth live unto ourselves, but unto him that died for us." Arm thou me with this mind; circumcise my heart, and make me a new creature. Let me no longer live to the desires of men, but to the will of God. Let thy Holy Spirit enable me to say with thy blessed apostle, "I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live: yet not I, but Christ liveth in me."

O thou Great Shepherd of souls, bring home unto thy fold all that are gone astray. Preserve thy Church from all heresy and schism, from all that

persecute or oppose the truth ; and give unto thy ministers wisdom and holiness, and the powerful aid of thy blessed Spirit.

Have mercy on all that are in affliction ; remember the poor and needy, the widow and fatherless, the friendless and oppressed ; heal the sick and languishing, give them a sanctified use of thy rod, and when thou seest it expedient for them, receive them into the number of thy departed saints, and with them into thine everlasting kingdom.

O my God, I praise thee for thy continual preservation of me, for thy fatherly protection over me this day ; (——) for all the comforts with which thou surroundest me, spiritual and temporal ; particularly for leave now to pray unto thee. O accept my poor services, and pardon the sinfulness of this and all my holy duties. Bless me, my friends and relations, my benefactors and mine enemies, with the blessings of thy children.

[Persons in Authority—The Nations of the Earth.]

These my prayers, O most merciful Father, vouchsafe to hear, through the mediation of Jesus Christ our Redeemer ; who, with thee and the Holy Ghost, is worshiped and glorified in all the Churches of the saints, one God blessed forever. Amen.

Thursday Morning.

O eternal God, my Sovereign Lord, I acknowledge that all I am, and all I have, is thine. O give me such a sense of thy infinite goodness, that I may return to thee all possible love and obedience.

I humbly and heartily thank thee for all the favors thou hast bestowed upon me ; for creating me after thine own image, for thy daily preserving me by thy good providence, for redeeming me by the death of thy blessed Son, and for the assistance of thy Holy Spirit ; for causing me to be born in a Christian country, for blessing me with plentiful means of salvation, with religious parents and friends, and all the means of grace. I also thank thee for all thy temporal blessings ; for my preservation this night ; (——) for my health, strength, food, raiment, and all the comforts and necessities of life. O may I always delight to “praise thy holy name,” and, above all thy benefits, love thee, my great Benefactor.

I believe, O sovereign Goodness, O mighty Wisdom, that thou dost sweetly order and govern all things, even the most minute, even the most noxious, to thy glory, and the good of those that love thee. I believe, O Father of the families of heaven and earth, that thou so disposest all events as may best magnify thy goodness to all thy children, especially those whose eyes wait upon thee.

O Lord Jesus, I give thee my body, my soul, my substance, my fame, my friends, my talents, my life ; dispose of me, and all that is mine, as it seemeth best unto thee. I am not mine own, but thine : claim

me as thy right, keep me as thy charge, love me as thy child ! Fight for me when I am assaulted, heal me when I am wounded, and revive me when I am destroyed.

O help me with thy grace, that whatsoever I shall do or suffer this day may tend to thy glory. Keep me in love to thee, and to all men. Do thou direct my paths, and teach me to set thee always before me. Let not the things of this life, or my concerns therein, alienate any part of my affections from thee ; nor let me ever pursue or regard them, but for thee, and in obedience to thy will.

Be merciful to all that are in distress, that struggle with pain, poverty, or reproach, (——.) Give to all that are in error the light of thy truth ; bring all sinners to repentance, (——) and give to all unbelievers humility and grace to receive the truth, and make acknowledgment of faith in Christ.

[*Heathen Nations — Jews — Mohammedans.*]

Bless all my friends and relations, acquaintance and enemies ; (——) unite us all to one another by mutual love, and to thyself by constant holiness ; that we, together with all those who are gone before us in thy faith and fear, may find a merciful acceptance in the last day, through the merits of thy blessed Son ; to whom with thee and the Holy Ghost be all glory, world without end !

Thursday Evening.

My Lord and my God, thou seest my heart, and my desires are not hid from thee. I would be thine, and only thine, forever. But I know I am nothing, and can do nothing of myself; yet thou art my ever-present and all-sufficient friend. O my God, my Saviour, my Sanctifier, turn not away thy face from a soul that seeks thee; but as thou hast kindled in me these desires, so confirm, increase, and satisfy them. Reject not that poor gift which I would make of myself unto thee, but teach me so to make it that it may be acceptable in thy sight. Lord, hear me, help me, and show mercy unto me, for Jesus Christ's sake.

To thee, O God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, my Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier, I give up myself entirely: may I no longer serve myself, but thee, all the days of my life.

I give thee my understanding; may it be my only care to know thee—thy perfections, thy works, and thy will. Let all things else be as dross unto me, for the excellency of this knowledge. And let me silence all reasonings against whatsoever thou teachest me, who canst neither deceive nor be deceived.

I give thee my will: may I have no will of my own; whatsoever thou willest may I will, and that only. May I will thy glory in all things, as thou dost, and make that my end in every thing.

I give thee my affections: do thou dispose of them all; be thou my love, my fear, my joy; and may nothing have any share in them, but with respect to

thee and for thy sake. What thou lovest may I love ; what thou hatest may I hate ; and that in such measure as thou art pleased to prescribe to me.

I give thee my body ; may I glorify thee with it, and preserve it holy, fit for thee, O God, to dwell in as the temple of the Holy Ghost. May I neither indulge it, nor use too much rigor toward it ; but keep it, as far as in me lies, healthy, vigorous, and active, and fit to do thee all manner of service which thou shalt call for.

I give thee all my worldly goods : may I prize them and use them only for thee : may I faithfully restore to thee, in the poor, all thou hast intrusted me with above the necessities of life ; and be content to part with them, too, whenever thou, my Lord, shalt require them at my hands.

I give thee my credit and reputation : may I never value it, but only in respect of thee : nor endeavor to maintain it, but as it may do thee service and advance thy honor in the world.

I give thee myself and my all : let me look upon myself to be nothing, and to have nothing, out of thee. Be thou the sole disposer and governor of myself and all ; be thou my portion and my all.

Having accepted me as thy servant, show me the path of duty. Give me a lively interest in the work of thy Church, and in the salvation of the world.

[*The Poor—The Sick—The Dying.*]

Grant me grace to do and suffer thy perfect will, and at length receive me to thy heavenly kingdom, for Christ's sake. Amen.

Friday Morning.

Almighty and everlasting God, I bless thee from my heart, that of thy infinite goodness thou hast preserved me the past night, and hast, with the impregnable defense of thy providence, protected me from the power and malice of the devil. Withdraw not, I humbly entreat thee, thy protection from me, but mercifully this day watch over me with the eyes of thy mercy. Direct my soul and body according to the rule of thy will, and fill my heart with thy Holy Spirit, that I may pass this day, and all the rest of my days, to thy glory.

O Saviour of the world, God of gods, light of light, thou that art the brightness of thy Father's glory, the express image of his person; thou that hast destroyed the power of the devil, that hast overcome death, "that sittest at the right hand of the Father," thou wilt speedily come down in thy Father's glory to judge all men according to their works; be thou my light and my peace; destroy the power of the devil in me, and make me a new creature. O thou who didst cast seven devils out of Mary Magdalene, cast out of my heart all corrupt affections. O thou who didst raise Lazarus from the dead, raise me from the death of sin. Thou who didst cleanse the lepers, heal the sick, and give sight to the blind, heal the disease of my soul. Open my eyes, and fix them singly on the prize of my high calling in Christ Jesus, and cleanse my heart from every desire but that of advancing thy glory.

O Jesus, despised and rejected of men, have

mercy upon me, and let me not be ashamed to follow thee. O Jesus, hated, calumniated, and persecuted, have mercy upon me, and let me not be ashamed to come after thee. O Jesus, betrayed and sold at a vile price, have mercy upon me, and make me content to be as my Master. O Jesus, blasphemed, accused, and wrongfully condemned, have mercy upon me, and teach me to endure the contradiction of sinners. O Jesus, clothed with a habit of reproach and shame, have mercy upon me, and let me not seek my own glory. O Jesus, insulted, mocked, and spit upon, have mercy upon me, and let me run with patience the race set before me. O Jesus, dragged to the pillar scourged and bathed in blood, have mercy upon me, and let me not faint in the fiery trial. O Jesus, crowned with thorns, and hailed in derision; O Jesus, burdened with our sins and the curses of the people; O Jesus, affronted, outraged, buffeted, overwhelmed with injuries, griefs, and humiliations; O Jesus, hanging on the accursed tree, bowing the head, giving up the ghost, have mercy upon me, and conform my whole soul to thy holy, humble, suffering Spirit.

[*The Mourner—The Tempted—The Penitent.*]

Hear, O merciful Father, my supplications, for the sake of thy Son Jesus; and bring me, with all those who have pleased thee from the beginning of the world; into the glories of thy Son's kingdom: to whom, with thee and the Holy Ghost, be all praise for ever and ever!

“Our Father, which art in heaven,” etc.

Friday Evening.

O God the Father, have mercy upon me.

O God the Son, who, knowing thy Father's will, didst come into the world to save me, have mercy upon me.

O God the Holy Ghost, who to the same end hast so often since breathed holy thoughts into me, have mercy upon me.

O holy, blessed, and glorious Trinity, whom, in three persons, I adore as one God, have mercy upon me.

I ask not of thee the things of this world ; give them to whom thou pleasest, so thou givest me mercy. O say unto my soul, "Be of good cheer ; thy sins are forgiven thee." O that I might never sin against thee more. And whereinsoever my conscience accuses me most, be thou most merciful unto me.

Save me, O God, as a brand snatched out of the fire.

Receive me, O my Saviour, as a sheep that is gone astray, but would now return to the great Shepherd and Bishop of my soul.

Father, accept my imperfect repentance, compassionate my infirmities, forgive my wickedness, purify my uncleanness, strengthen my weakness, fix my unstableness, and let thy good Spirit watch over me forever, and thy love ever rule in my heart, through the merits, and sufferings, and love of thy Son, in whom thou art always well pleased.

Give thy grace, O holy Jesus, to all the world ; and let all who are redeemed by thy blood acknowledge

thee to be the Lord. Let all Christians, especially those of this nation, keep themselves unspotted from the world. Let all in authority rule with wisdom and justice ; and let ministers of the gospel be exemplary in their lives, and discreet and diligent in their labors. Let our schools and universities excel in true religion and sound learning. Be a help at hand to all that are afflicted, and assist them to trust in thee. Raise up friends for the widow and fatherless, the friendless and oppressed. Give patience to all that are sick, comfort to all troubled consciences, strength to all that are tempted. Be gracious to my relations, (—) to all that are endeared to me by their kindnesses or acquaintance, to all who remember me in their prayers, or desire to be remembered in mine (—.) Sanctify, O merciful Lord, the friendship which thou hast granted me with these thy servants (—.) O let our prayers be heard for each other, while our hearts are united in thy fear and love, and graciously unite them therein more and more. Strengthen the hearts of us, thy servants, against all our corruptions and temptations ; enable us to consecrate ourselves faithfully and entirely to thy service. Grant that we may “provoke each other to love” and serve thee, and grow up together before thee in thy fear and love, to thy heavenly kingdom. And by thy infinite mercies, vouchsafe to bring us, with all those that are redeemed, to rejoice together before thee, through the merits of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

Saturday Morning.

O God, thou great Creator, and Sovereign Lord of heaven and earth, thou Father of angels and men, thou Giver of life, and Protector of all thy creatures, mercifully accept this my morning sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving, which I desire to offer, with all humility, to thy divine Majesty. "Thou art praised, O Lord, by all thy works," and magnified by everything which thou hast created. The sun rejoiceth to run his course, that he may set forth thy praise.

Nor do the moon and stars refrain to manifest thy glory even amid the silent night. The earth breathes forth each day perfumes, as incense to thee, her sacred King, who hast crowned her with herbs and trees, and beautified her with hills and dales. The deep uttereth his voice, and lifteth up his hands on high to thee, the great Creator, the universal King, the everlasting God. The floods clap their hands, and the hills are joyful together before thee; the fruitful vales rejoice and sing thy praise. O pour thy grace into my heart, that I may worthily magnify thy great and glorious name. Thou hast made me and sent me into the world to do thy work. O assist me to fulfill the end of my creation, and to show forth thy praise with all diligence, by giving myself up to thy service. "Prosper the work of my hands upon me," O Lord; O prosper thou whatever I shall undertake this day, that it may tend to thy glory, the good of my neighbor, and the salvation of my own soul.

Preserve me from all those snares and temptations

which continually solicit me to offend thee. Guide me by thy Holy Spirit in all those places whither thy providence shall lead me this day ; and suffer not my communications with the world to dissipate my thoughts, to make me inadvertent to thy presence, or lukewarm in thy service ; but let me always walk as in thy sight, and as one who knows this life to be the seed-time of an eternal harvest. Keep me, I beseech thee, undefiled, unblamable, and unreprouable unto the end ; and grant that I may so diligently perform thy will, in that station wherein thou hast been pleased to place me, that I may make my calling and election sure, through Jesus Christ, our blessed Lord and Saviour.

With a propitious eye, O gracious Comforter, behold all that are in affliction ; let the sighings of the prisoners, the groans of the sick, the prayers of the oppressed, the desire of the poor and needy, come before thee. (——) Give unto my enemies (——) grace and pardon, charity to me and love to thee ; remove the cloud from their eyes, the stony from their hearts, that they may know and feel what it is to love their neighbor as themselves. And may it please thee to enable me to love all mine enemies, to bless them that curse me, to do good to them that hate me, and to pray for those who despitefully use me and persecute me.

[*Bible Societies — Sunday-Schools.*]

Hear thou my prayers for the sake of Jesus Christ my Lord. Amen.

Saturday Evening.

O most great and glorious God, who art mighty in thy power, and wonderful in thy doings toward the sons of men, accept, I beseech thee, my unfeigned thanks and praise for my creation, preservation, and all the other blessings which, in the riches of thy mercy, thou hast from time to time poured down upon me. All the powers of my soul are too few to conceive the thanks that are due to thee, even for vouchsafing me the honor of now appearing before thee and conversing with thee. But thou hast declared thou wilt accept the sacrifice of thanksgiving in return for thy goodness. Forever therefore will I bless thee, and I will adore thy power, and magnify thy goodness: "My tongue shall sing of thy righteousness, and tell of thy salvation from day to day." I will give thanks unto thee for ever and ever; I will praise my God while I have my being. O that I had the heart of the seraphim, that I might burn with love like theirs. But though I am upon earth, yet will I praise as I can the king of heaven; though I am a feeble, mortal creature, yet will I join my song with those that excel in strength, with the immortal host of angels and archangels, thrones, dominions, and powers, while they laud and magnify thy glorious name, and sing with incessant shouts of praise,

"Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of Hosts! Heaven and earth are full of his glory! Glory be to thee, O Lord most high. Amen. Halleluiah."

Accept, O merciful Father, my most humble thanks

for thy preservation of me this day (——.) O continue thy loving-kindness toward me, and take me into thy protection this night. Let thy holy angels watch over me to defend me from the attempts of evil men and evil spirits. Let me rest in peace, and not sleep in sin; and grant that I may rise more fit for thy service.

Be gracious to all who are near and dear to me. Thou knowest their names, and art acquainted with their wants. Of thy goodness be pleased to proportion thy blessings to their necessities. Pardon my enemies, and give them repentance and charity, and me grace to overcome evil with good. Have compassion on all who are distressed in mind, body, or estate, and give them steady patience and timely deliverance.

Prepare me for the holy Sabbath-day, and all the duties and privileges it may bring to me.

*[Ministers—Churches—Inmates of Prisons, Hospitals,
and Asylums—The Sick and the Poor.]*

Now, to God the Father, who first loved us, and made us accepted in the Beloved; to God the Son, who loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood; to God the Holy Ghost, who sheddeth the love of God abroad in our hearts, be all love, and all glory in time and to all eternity. Amen.

PRAYER OF SELF-DEDICATION.

Eternal and ever-blessed God, I desire to present myself before thee with the deepest humiliation and abasement of soul; sensible how unworthy such a sinful worm is to appear before the Holy Majesty of heaven, the King of kings and Lord of lords, and especially for such an object as this, even to enter into a covenant with thee. But the plan is thine own. Thine infinite condescension hath offered it by thy Son, my Saviour, and thy grace hath inclined my heart to accept of it.

I come, therefore, acknowledging myself to have been a great offender; smiting on my breast, and saying, with the humble publican, "God be merciful to me a sinner!" I come, invited in the name of thy Son, and wholly trusting in his merits: entreating, that for his sake thou wilt be merciful to my unrighteousness, and wilt no more remember my sins. Receive, I beseech thee, thy revolted creature, who is now convinced of thy right to him, and desires nothing so much as that he may be thine!

This day do I, with the utmost solemnity, surrender myself to thee. I renounce all former lords that have had dominion over me; and I consecrate to thee all that I am, and all that I have—the faculties of my mind, the members of my body, my worldly

possessions, my time, my talents, and my influence over others—to be all used entirely for thy glory, and resolutely employed in obedience to thy commands, as long as thou continuest me in life; with an ardent desire and humble resolution to continue thine through all eternity.

To thy direction also I resign myself, and all I am and have, to be disposed of by thee in such a manner as thou shalt, in thine infinite wisdom, judge most subservient to the purposes of thy glory. To thee I leave the management of all events, and say, without reserve, “Not my will, but thine, O God, be done.”

Use me, O Lord, I beseech thee, as an instrument for thy service. Number me among thy peculiar people. Let me be washed in the blood of thy dear Son. Let me be sanctified by his Spirit. Transform me more and more into his image. Impart to me, through him, all needful influences of thy purifying, cheering, and comforting Spirit. And let my life be spent under those influences, and in the light of thy gracious countenance, as my Father and my God.

Lead me in all pathways of usefulness and duty. May I find my chief joy in doing thy work and will. May I be ever ready to bear the cross of Christ, and endure as seeing Him who is invisible. Though engaged in the necessary business of this world, may I be more intent on laying up treasure in heaven.

And when the solemn hour of death shall come, wilt thou receive me to thyself and give me an eternal inheritance among them that are sanctified, for the sake of Jesus Christ my Saviour and Redeemer. Amen.

A MINISTER'S CLOSET PRAYER.

O Lord God, I am alone with thee. I have entered into my closet. I have shut my door that I may pray to thee in secret, for thou hearest and lovest secret prayer. When I pray in thy house, even when I pray in my household, I am seen to pray. But here I pour out my soul before thee alone. Here I seek thy face alone. Here I lift up my soul to thee. Here I bow myself to the ground before thee. Here I hold communion with thee, O God, most high, through the name of thy dear Son, my adorable Saviour.

O gracious Father, when I am occupied before men, I know not the power of the opinions of men over me. I know not how much I do to be seen, or say to be heard of them. Hence it is good for me to be alone with thee. Here I would seek to please thee only, and to worship thee in the beauty of holiness.

Grant, O God, that I may so draw nigh to thee as to be heard for the sake of Jesus Christ, my Lord. Send to my heart the quickening influence and the saving power of the Holy Ghost. May the blessed Spirit himself make intercession for me with groanings that cannot be uttered, helping also my infirmities, and teaching me for what things and in what manner I ought to pray. Give me, O glorious author of my being and my hopes, a due sense of thy divine majesty and of thine immediate presence. Let me

also feel a due sense of my own littleness and unworthiness. Lord, help me. I cry unto thee for help. I have no sufficiency of myself. I can only trust in thee and thy grace.

How infinite was thy condescension in calling me to preach thy blessed Gospel. Yet, O Lord, thou hast called me. Thou hast chosen me out of my brethren for this great work. I believe that I was inwardly moved of the Holy Ghost to declare publicly the unsearchable riches of Christ. I have been set apart for this office. I cannot go back. "A necessity is laid upon me, woe unto me if I preach not the Gospel." I am thine, O Christ, for this blessed work, thine for thy people's sake, thine that I may be the servant of all, and by all means save some. Having put my hand to the plow, may I never look back.

Thou hast also in thy providence set me as a pastor over thy flock, but unless thou guidest me how can I guide others? Unless thou dost teach me, how can I instruct thy people? Be thou, O Lord, my shepherd, that I may watch the sheep of thy pasture. Grant unto me the constant indwelling of the Holy Ghost the Comforter. May he strengthen me with all the gifts and grace necessary for my work. May I have zeal with prudence, fervor with patience, love with boldness, earnestness with humility, aptness to teach, meekness in teaching, contempt of the world, and obedience to the law of God. I look up to thee, O Lord, for all things. I cry aloud for help. "Help me, and that right early." Help me that I may be "an able minister of the New Testament; not of the letter, but of the Spirit." That I may serve thee

with a true heart and a tender conscience, teach me, O my blessed Saviour, to set before my mind continually what thou requirest at my hands in order that I may approve myself before thee as "a workman that needeth not to be ashamed." May I give thee my entire self, my soul, my strength, all my understanding, all my thoughts, all my time, all my affections, and all my powers of mind and body, that in all ways, and in all things, and at all times, I may work and live for thee. May I thus be enabled to preach the Gospel in season, out of season; directly, indirectly, publicly; privately, at home, abroad, in sermons, in conversation, in the church, by the wayside, in schools, in families, in sick rooms, and in the marts of business.

Aid me, O Lord, to preach thee to the young, to the middle aged, to the old, to the sick, to the strong, to those without faith that they may believe, to believers that their faith may be increased, to the careless that they may have care, to the lukewarm that they may glow with love, to the afflicted that they may find consolation in thee. Enable me to preach thee in a right spirit, earnestly, lovingly, with sincerity, weighing each man's state, making a difference, on "some having compassion," "coming to others with the rod," watching occasions, especially times of sickness or other affliction. May I preach thee also by my life, my conversation, and my influence. Being set as an ensample to the flock, may I constantly illustrate the whole Gospel that I profess and teach. Of all the souls within the reach of my influence may mine be the most pure, the most spiritual, the least

selfish, the least worldly, the most heavenly minded. May I be myself a constant sermon to my flock. While I invite them 'to heaven, may I be seen walking heavenward myself.

Therefore, O Lord Jesus, I sincerely pray for true holiness of heart and life. May not any soul be lost, or the weakest of thy saints be caused to stumble through any fault in me. That I may not faint under so great a charge, teach me, O my divine Master, to remember the exceeding great reward thou dost offer to the stewards of thy mysteries that shall be found faithful at thy coming. Remind me of those texts of holy Scripture wherein thou dost speak of the recompense of reward.

"Take heed," thou hast said through thine apostle to Timothy, "unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee."

Thou hast said through thine apostle James, "If any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him; let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins." Thou hast said through thy prophet Daniel, "They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars for ever and ever." Even our endeavors to save, though unblest to others, bring a blessing unto ourselves. "If thou warn the wicked, and he turn not from his wickedness, nor from his wicked way, he shall die in his iniquity; but thou hast delivered thy soul." Most gracious and yet most admonish-

ing words! May they serve to stir up the gift that is in me.

O if I should be permitted to save souls from death, and present them before thee with great joy, what account shall I make of all my labors, self-denials, watchings, sacrifices of ease and worldly tastes? Surely "the loss of all things" is "as dung," if I can but gain thee and behold thee forever. Lead me forth, O Lord; I desire this prize; help me to contend for it, and to attain it; and send thy Holy Ghost to comfort and strengthen me. I am thine; I would be thine in this life and forever; keep me under the shadow of thy wings. Draw up my soul toward thee. Increase my faith, my hope, my charity; knit my heart unto thee, and make me a faithful shepherd of thy sheep, that I may at last see thy glory, and partake of it with all saints and angels, through thine own most precious blood.

Remember in special mercy the several members of my household, ———, ———, ———. Bless with thine abounding grace each member of my Church, especially ———, ———. Awaken and save my dear unconverted friends, ———, ———. Strengthen, by the power of the Holy Ghost, my beloved co-laborers in this great work, ———, ———. And, O Lord, when we have severally finished the work thou hast given us to do on earth, receive us one and all with thy redeemed and elect children to dwell with thee forever in the Church of the first-born in the temple not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. And to thy great name, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, shall be the praise of our salvation, for ever and ever. Amen.

FAMILY DEVOTION.

PRAYERS FOR FAMILIES.

FIRST WEEK.

Sunday Morning.

Almighty and eternal God, we desire to praise thy holy name for so graciously raising us up, in soundness of body and mind, to see the light of this day.

We bless thee in behalf of all thy creatures: for "the eyes of all look unto thee, and thou givest them their meat in due season." But above all we acknowledge thy inestimable benefits bestowed upon mankind in Christ Jesus. We thank thee for his miraculous birth, for his most holy life, his bitter agony and bloody death, for his glorious resurrection on this day, his ascension into heaven, his triumph over all the powers of darkness, and his sitting at thy right hand for evermore.

O God, how great was thy love to the sinful sons of men, to give "thy only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him might not perish but have everlasting life!" How great was that love which hath committed our souls to One so "mighty to save;" which hath chosen us to be thy sons and heirs, together with Christ Jesus, and set such a High Priest over thy house and family, to make intercession for us, to pour thy blessings upon us, and to send forth his angels to "minister unto them who

shall be heirs of salvation?" O the riches of thy grace, in sending the Holy Ghost to make us "abound in hope" that we shall one day rise from the dead, and, after our short labors here, rest with thee in thy eternal glory.

O that we could begin this day in devout meditations, in joy unspeakable, and in blessing and praising thee, who hast given us such good hope and everlasting consolation. Lift up our minds above all these little things below, which are apt to distract our thoughts; and keep them above, till our hearts are fully bent to seek thee every day, in the way wherein Jesus hath gone before us, though it should be with the loss of all we here possess.

Make it our delight to praise thee, to call to mind thy loving-kindness, and to offer the sacrifice of thanksgiving. And accept, good Lord, all the praises of all thy people met together this day. O that "thy ways were known upon all the earth, thy saving health among all nations;" and that all that are in authority may be filled with thy Holy Spirit, and be faithful subjects of the Lord Jesus, "the King of kings and Lord of lords." O that thy "priests may be clothed with righteousness, and thy saints rejoice and sing;" that all who are in distress may trust in thee, the "help of their countenance and their God." O Lord, hear us, and make thy face to shine upon thy servants, that we may "enter into thy gates with thanksgiving, and into thy courts with praise;" that we may be thankful unto thee, and bless thy name.

"Our Father which art in heaven," etc.

Sunday Evening.

O thou "high and holy One that inhabitest eternity," thou art to be feared and loved by all thy servants. "All thy works praise thee, O God;" and we especially give thanks unto thee for thy marvelous love in Christ Jesus, by whom thou hast "reconciled the world to thyself." Thou hast "given us exceeding great and gracious promises." Thou hast sealed them with his blood, thou hast confirmed them by his resurrection and ascension, and the coming of the Holy Ghost. We thank thee that thou hast given us so many happy opportunities of knowing the "truth as it is in Jesus," even "the mystery which was hid from ages and generations," but is now revealed to them that believe. Blessed be thy goodness for that great consolation, and for the assistance of thy Holy Spirit.

We offer up again our souls and bodies to thee to be governed, not by our will, but thine. O let it be ever the joy of our hearts to be under the conduct of thy unerring wisdom, to follow thy counsels, and to be ruled in all things by thy holy will. And let us never distrust thy abundant kindness and tender care over us, whatsoever it is thou wouldest have us to do or to suffer in this world.

O God, purify our hearts, that we may love thee supremely, and rejoice in being beloved of thee; that we may confide in thee, and absolutely resign ourselves to thee, and be filled with constant devotion toward thee. O that we may never sink into a base love of any thing here below, nor be oppressed with

the cares of this life ; but assist us to “abhor that which is evil, and cleave to that which is good.” Let us “use this world as not abusing it.” Give us true humility of spirit, that we may “not think of ourselves more highly than we ought to think.” Keep us from being “wise in our own conceits.” “Let our moderation be known to all men.” Make us “kindly affectioned one to another ;” to delight in doing good ; to “show all meekness to all men.” And help us to “pray always and not faint ; in every thing to give thanks, and offer up the sacrifice of praise continually ; to rejoice in hope of thy glory ;” to “possess our souls in patience ;” and to “learn in whatsoever state we are, therewith to be content.” Make us “know both how to be abased, and how to abound : every-where, and in all things,” instruct us “both to abound and to suffer want,” being enabled to “do all things through Christ which strengtheneth us.”

O that the light of all Christians did so “shine before men,” that others might “glorify thee, our Father which art in heaven.” “Send forth thy light and thy truth” into all the dark corners of the earth, that “all kings may fall down before thee, and all nations do thee service !”

Protect us, we beseech thee, and all our friends every-where this night ; and awaken in the morning those good thoughts in our hearts, that the words of our Saviour may abide in us, and we in him, who hath taught us when we pray to say,

“Our Father which art in heaven,” etc.

Monday Morning.

We humble ourselves, O Lord of heaven and earth, before thy glorious Majesty. We acknowledge thy eternal power, wisdom, goodness, and truth, and desire to render thee most unfeigned thanks for all the benefits which thou pourest upon us ; but above all, for thine inestimable love, in the redemption of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ.

We implore thy tender mercies in the forgiveness of all our sins, whereby we have offended either in thought, word, or deed. We desire to be truly sorry for all our misdoings, and utterly to renounce whatsoever is contrary to thy will. We desire to devote our whole body, soul, and spirit to thee. And as thou dost inspire us with these desires, so accompany them always with thy grace that we may every day, with our whole hearts, give ourselves up to thy service.

We desire to be holy and undefiled as our blessed Master was. And we trust thou wilt fulfill all the gracious promises which he hath made to us. Let them be dearer to us than thousands of gold and silver ; let them be the comfort and joy of our hearts. We ask nothing, but that it may be unto thy servants according to his word.

Thou hast mercifully kept us the last night. Receive us likewise into thy protection this day. Guide and assist us in all our thoughts, words, and actions. Make us willing to do and suffer what thou pleasest ; waiting for the mercy of our Lord, Christ Jesus, unto eternal life.

Blessed be thy goodness, which hath not suffered us to wander without instruction after the foolish desires of our own hearts, but hath clearly shown us where our happiness lies. O may we receive, with all thankfulness, those holy words which teach us the blessedness of poverty of spirit, of mourning after thee, of meekness and gentleness, of hungering and thirsting after righteousness, of mercifulness and purity of heart, of doing good unto all, and patiently suffering for doing the will of our Lord Christ.

May we ever feel ourselves happy in having the kingdom of God within us, in the comforts of the Holy One, in being filled with all the fruits of righteousness, in being made the children of the Highest, and, above all, in seeing thee, our God. Let us abound in thy love more and more; and in continual prayers and praises to thee, the Father of mercies and God of all consolation, in Jesus Christ our Lord.

[*Our Rulers—Christian Ministers and Missionaries.*]

Similar blessings we crave for our friends, relations, and acquaintance, that we may all live in perfect love and peace together, and rejoice together at the great day of the Lord Jesus, in whose holy words we sum up all our wants:—

“Our Father which art in heaven,” etc.

Monday Evening.

Almighty and most merciful Father, in whom we live, move, and have our being, to whose tender compassions we owe our safety the day past, together with all the comforts of this life, and the hopes of that which is to come ; we praise thee, O Lord, we bow ourselves before thee, acknowledging we have nothing but what we receive from thee. "Unto thee do we give thanks," O God, 'who daily pourest thy benefits upon us.

Blessed be thy goodness for our health, for our food and raiment, for our peace and safety, for the love of our friends, for all our blessings in this life, and our desire to attain that life which is immortal. Blessed be thy love, for that we feel in our hearts any motion toward thee. Behold, O Lord, we present ourselves before thee, to be inspired with such a vigorous sense of thy love as may put us forward with a greater earnestness, zeal, and diligence in all our duty. Renew in us, we beseech thee, a lively image of thyself, in all righteousness, purity, mercy, faithfulness, and truth. O that Jesus, the hope of glory, may be formed in us, in all humility, meekness, patience, and an absolute surrender of our souls and bodies to thy holy will ; that we may not live, but Christ may live in us ; that every one of us may say, "The life I now live in the flesh, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me."

Let the remembrance of his love, who made himself an offering for our sins, be ever dear and precious

to us. Let it continually move us to offer up ourselves to thee to do thy will as our blessed Master did. May we place our entire confidence in thee, and still trust ourselves with thee, who hast not "spared thine own Son, but freely given him up for us all." May we humbly accept whatsoever thou sendest us, and in every thing give thanks."

And now that we are going to lay ourselves down to sleep, take us into thy gracious protection, and settle our spirits in such quiet and delightful thoughts of the glory where our Lord Jesus lives, that we may desire to go to him who died for us, that whether we wake or sleep, we may live together with him.

To thy blessing we commend all mankind, high and low, rich and poor, that they may all faithfully serve thee, and contentedly enjoy whatsoever is needful for them.

[*The Churches—Sunday-Schools.*]

We leave all we have with thee, especially our friends, and those who are dear unto us; desiring that when we are dead and gone they may lift up their souls in this manner unto thee, and teach those that come after to praise, love, and obey thee. And if we awake again in the morning may we again praise thee with joyful lips, and still offer ourselves a more acceptable sacrifice to thee, through Jesus Christ our Lord; in whose words we beseech thee to hear us, according to the full sense and meaning thereof:

"Our Father which art in heaven," etc.

Tuesday Morning.

O most great and mighty Lord, the possessor of heaven and earth, all the angels rejoice in blessing and praising thee, the Father of spirits ; for " thou hast created all things, and in wisdom hast thou made them all," and spread thy tender mercies over all thy works. We desire thankfully to acknowledge thy bounty to us, and thy particular grace and favor in Jesus Christ, our merciful Redeemer. O give us a deep sense of that love which gave him to die for us, that he might be " the Author of eternal salvation to all them that obey him."

O that we may ever approach thee with delight, and feel it the joy of our hearts to think of thee, to praise thee, to give thee thanks, and to offer ourselves with absolute resignation to thee. O that mercy may always please us, as it pleaseth thee ; that we may be strictly just and righteous ; may cheerfully pass by injuries, freely deny ourselves whatever is not for thy glory : willingly submit to thy fatherly corrections, and perform the duties of our several relations with singleness of heart. Render us so mindful of the great love of our Lord that we may be zealously concerned for his glory, and use our utmost diligence to promote his religion in the world ; delighting to commemorate his death and passion, making a joyful sacrifice of our souls and bodies to him, and earnestly desiring that his kingdom may come over all the earth.

Fulfill, most merciful Lord, all our petitions ; and as thou hast graciously protected us during the past

night, so accompany us all this day with thy blessing, that we may please thee in body and soul, and be safe under thy defense, who art ever nigh unto all those that call upon thee. As we go to our daily duties may thy love dwell richly in our hearts. May we be active to do thy will, patient to endure trials, and zealous to promote the interests of thy kingdom upon the earth.

O that all men may be awakened to a lively and thankful sense of all thy benefits ! Stir up especially the minds of all Christian people to follow "the truth as it is in Jesus," and exercise themselves "to have a conscience void of offense toward God and toward man."

[*Ministers—Missionaries—The Heathen.*]

We recommend to thee all our friends and neighbors, all the poor, the sick, and the afflicted, desiring those mercies for them which we should ask for ourselves were we in their condition. "O God, whose never-failing providence ordereth all things both in heaven and earth, keep them and us, we beseech thee, from all hurtful things, and give us those things which are profitable for us, according to thine abundant mercy in our Lord Jesus ;" in whose words we conclude our supplication unto thee, saying,

"Our Father which art in heaven," etc.

Tuesday Evening.

Almighty and everlasting God, the sovereign Lord of all creatures in heaven and earth, we acknowledge that our being and all our comforts depend on thee, the Fountain of all good. We have nothing but what is owing entirely to thy free and bounteous love, O most blessed Creator, and to the riches of thy grace, O most blessed Redeemer.

To thee, therefore, be given, by us, and by all creatures whom thou hast made to know how great and good thou art, all honor and praise, all love and obedience, as long as we have any being. "It is but meet, right, and our bounden duty, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks unto thee, O Lord," and devoutly resign both soul and body to thee; to be absolutely governed and ruled according to thy holy will.

O that we may heartily surrender our wills to thine; that we may unchangeably cleave unto it with the greatest and most entire affection to all thy commands. O that there may abide forever in us such a strong and powerful sense of thy mighty love towards us in Christ Jesus as may constrain us freely and willingly to please thee, in the constant exercise of righteousness and mercy, temperance and charity, meekness and patience, truth and fidelity, together with such a humble, contented, and peaceable spirit, as may adorn the religion of our Lord and Master. Yea, let it ever be the joy of our hearts to be righteous, as thou art righteous; to be merciful, as thou, our heavenly Father, art merciful; to be

holy, as thou who hast called us art holy, in all manner of conversation ; to be endued with thy divine wisdom, and to resemble thee in faithfulness and truth. O that the example of our blessed Saviour may be always dear unto us, that we may cheerfully follow him in every holy temper, and delight to do thy will, O God. Let these desires which thou hast given us never die or languish in our hearts, but be kept always alive, always in their vigor and force, by the perpetual inspirations of the Holy Ghost.

Accept our thanks for thy merciful preservation this day. We are bold again to commit ourselves unto thee this night. Defend us from all the powers of darkness, and raise up our spirits, together with our bodies, in the morning, to such a sense of thy continued goodness as may provoke us all the day long to an unwearied diligence in well-doing.

And the same mercies that we beg for ourselves, we desire for the rest of mankind ; especially for those who are called by the name of Christ. Give to husbands and wives, parents and children, masters and servants, the grace to so conduct themselves in their several relations that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things, that they may ultimately receive of him a crown of glory ; in whose holy name and words we continue to beseech thy grace and mercy toward us and all thy people everywhere, saying,

“Our Father which art in heaven,” etc.

Wednesday Morning.

O God, blessed forever, we thank and praise thee for all thy benefits, for the comforts of this life, and our hope of everlasting salvation in the life to come. We desire to have a lively sense of thy love always possessing our hearts, that may still constrain us to love thee, to obey thee, to trust in thee, to be content with the portion thy love allots unto us, and to rejoice even in the midst of all the troubles of this life.

Thou hast delivered thine own Son for us all. How shalt thou not with him also freely give us all things? We depend upon thee especially for the grace of thy Holy Spirit. O that we may feel it perpetually bearing us up, by the strength of our most holy faith, above all the temptations that may at any time assail us; that we may keep ourselves unspotted from the world, and may still cleave to thee in righteousness, in lowliness, and in purity of heart, yea, possessing the whole mind that was in Christ.

Let thy mighty power enable us to do our duty toward thee, and toward all men, with care, and diligence, and zeal, and perseverance, unto the end. Help us to be meek and gentle in our conversation, prudent and discreet in ordering our affairs, observant of thy fatherly providence in every thing that befalls us, thankful for thy benefits, patient under thy chastisements, and readily disposed for every good word and work. Preserve in us a constant remembrance of thy all-seeing eye; of thy inestimable love in Jesus Christ, whereof thou hast given us so many

pledges, and of the great account we must give to him at the day of his appearing ; that so we may continue steadfast and unmovable, and be abundant in the work of the Lord, knowing that our labor shall not be in vain in the Lord.

Deliver us, we beseech thee, from worldly cares and foolish desires ; from vain hopes and causeless fears ; and so dispose our hearts that death itself may not be dreadful to us, but we may welcome it with a cheerful countenance, when and howsoever it shall approach.

O that our hearts may be so firmly established in grace that nothing may affright us, or shake our constancy, but we may rather choose to die than to dishonor Him who died for us ! We resign ourselves to thy wisdom and goodness, who knowest what is best for us ; believing that thou " wilt never suffer us to be tempted above what we are able, and wilt with the temptation also make a way to escape, that we may be able to bear it."

[*The Poor—Afflicted—Insane—Bereaved.*]

Guide us, good Lord, and govern us by thy Spirit. May we be so united to thee here as not to be divided when thou art pleased to call us hence, but together enter into thy glory, to dwell with thee in love and joy that shall never die, through Jesus Christ, our blessed Lord and Saviour ; who hath taught us when we pray to say,

" Our Father which art in heaven," etc.

Wednesday Evening.

“O Lord, how manifold are thy works ! In wisdom hast thou made them all. The day is thine, the night also is thine ; thou hast prepared the light and the sun.” We render thee thanks for all the benefits which thou hast bestowed on the whole world ; especially on us, whom thou hast called to the knowledge of thy grace in Christ Jesus. It is a marvelous love wherewith thou hast loved us. Thou hast not dealt so with any people ; and as for thy great and precious promises, they have not known them.

Accept, O merciful Father, the good resolutions which thou hast inspired us with by thy Spirit. Strengthen them, we beseech thee, with thy continued grace, that no sudden desires, vehement inclinations, ineffectual purposes, no, nor partial performances, may lead us into a false opinion of ourselves ; but that we may bring forth actually, and with a constant spirit, all the fruits of righteousness which are by Christ Jesus.

Deny not, O Lord, the desires of those souls who would offer up themselves entirely to thy service. But preserve us always in seriousness of spirit. Let the sense of our weakness make us watchful and diligent, the sense of our former negligence excite us to be fervent in spirit, and the goodness of thy commands render us fruitful and abundant in the work of the Lord. O that all our pious affections may be turned into actions of piety and holiness ! May all our actions be spirited with zeal, and all our zeal regulated with prudence, and our prudence void of all

guile, and joined with perfect integrity of heart ; that, adorning our most holy faith here, by an upright, charitable, and discreet conversation, we may receive praise in the day of the Lord, and be numbered with thy saints in glory everlasting.

O lift up our affections to things above, that we may have perfect contentment in well doing and patient suffering, and that the good hope we have of being eternally beloved of thee may make us rejoice evermore. Free us from the cares of the world, from all distrust of thy good providence, from repining at any thing that befalls us, and enable us in every thing to give thanks, believing that all things are ordered wisely, and shall work together for good for them that love the Lord.

[The Soldier—The Sailor—The Missionary.]

Remember all those who have done good unto us, and reward them sevenfold into their bosom. Grant forgiveness and charity to all our enemies, and continue good will among all our neighbors. Support the sick with faith and patience ; assist those who are leaving this world. May the lessons of adversity and the blessings of prosperity alike conduce to a knowledge of thee, and to the reception and obedience of thy truth.

Receive the souls which thou hast redeemed with thy Son's precious blood, and sanctified by the Holy Ghost ; and give us all a glorious resurrection and eternal life.

"Our Father which art in heaven," etc.

Thursday Morning.

O Lord, the God of our salvation, "thou art the hope of all the ends of the earth." Upon thee the eyes of all do wait, for thou givest unto all life and breath and all things. Thou still watchest over us for good ; thou daily renewest to us our lives and thy mercies ; and thou hast given us the assurance of thy word, that if we commit our affairs to thee, if we acknowledge thee in all our ways, thou wilt direct our paths. We desire, O Lord, to be still under thy gracious conduct and fatherly protection. We beg the guidance and help of thy good Spirit to choose our inheritance for us, and to dispose of us, and all that concerns us, to the glory of thy name.

O Lord, withdraw not thy tender mercies from us, nor the comforts of thy presence. Never punish our past sins by giving us over to the power of our sins ; but pardon all our sins, and save us from all our iniquities. And grant us, heavenly Father, the continual sense of thy gracious acceptance of us in the Son of thy love, that our souls may bless thee, and "all that is within us may praise thy holy name."

And O that we may find the joy of the Lord to be our strength ; to defend us from all our sins, and to make us more zealous of every good work ; that herein we may "exercise ourselves, to have a conscience void of offense both toward God and toward men." O help us "to walk circumspectly ; not as fools, but as wise," carefully "redeeming the time," improving all those seasons and means of grace which thou art pleased to put into our hands. Sanctify to

us all our employments in the world ; our crosses also, and our comforts : all the conditions of life we pass through, and all the events that befall us ; till, through the merits of thy Son, and the multitude of thy mercies, we are conducted safe to “ be ever with the Lord.”

Thou “ hast laid help for us upon One that is mighty ;” that is “ able to save unto the uttermost all those who come unto God through him.” Through him thou hast encouraged us to come boldly, that we “ may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.” Help us, we beseech thee, to demean ourselves as becomes the children of God, the redeemed of the Lord, the members of Christ.

[*The Awakening of Sinners—The Revival of Christian Churches—The Circulation of the Holy Scriptures.*]

O gracious Father, keep us, we pray thee, this day in thy fear and favor, and teach us, in all our thoughts, words, and works, to live to thy glory. O let thy good providence be our defense, and thy good Spirit our guide, and counselor, and supporter in all our ways.

Let thy grace, O Lord Jesus, thy love, O heavenly Father, and thy comfortable fellowship, O blessed Spirit, be with us, and with all that desire our prayers, this day and for evermore.

“ Our Father which art in heaven,” etc.

Thursday Evening.

O Lord our God, thy glory is above all our thoughts, and thy mercy is over all thy works. We are still living monuments of thy goodness: for thou hast not cut us off in our sins, but still givest us a good hope and strong consolation through grace. Thou hast sent thy only Son into the world, "that whosoever believeth in him should not perish," in his sins, "but have everlasting life." O Lord, we believe; help our unbelief; and give us true "repentance toward God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ," that we may be in the number of those who do indeed repent and "believe to the saving of the soul. Being justified by faith," let us "have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ;" let us "rejoice in him through whom we now have redemption in his blood;" and let "the love of God be shed abroad in our hearts, by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us."

Let our supplications also ascend before thee for the whole race of mankind. Send thy word unto all the ends of the earth, and let it be the savor of life unto all that hear it. Be gracious to this our native land. O do thou rule all our rulers, counsel all our counselors, teach all our teachers, and order all public affairs to thy glory. Turn from us the judgments which we feel or fear; continue thy blessings to our souls and bodies; and, notwithstanding all our provocations, be thou still our God, and let us be thy people. Have compassion on all the children of affliction, and sanctify thy fatherly corrections to

them. Be gracious to all our friends and neighbors. Reward our benefactors. Bless our relations with the best of thy blessings, with thy fear and love. Preserve us from our enemies, and reconcile them both to us and to thyself. O that all the habitations of Christians may be houses of prayer ! And be thou especially kind to the several families where thy blessed name is called upon. Let thy blessing rest upon us of this family. Bless our present circumstances to us ; and fit us all for whatsoever thou shalt be pleased to call us to enjoy or to suffer. O teach us how “to want and how to abound.” In every condition secure our hearts to thyself ; and make us ever to approve ourselves sincere and faithful in thy service.

[*The Drunkard—The Swearer—The Criminal.*]

And now, O Father of mercies, be pleased to accept our evening sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving. O that thou wouldest imprint and preserve upon our hearts a lively sense of all thy kindness to us ; that our souls may bless thee, and all that is within us may praise thy holy name. Yea, let us give thee thanks from the ground of the heart, and praise our God while we have our being : for all thy patience with us, thy care over us, and thy continual mercy to us, blessed be thy name, O Lord God, our heavenly Father ; and unto thee, with the Son of thy love, and Spirit of grace, be all thanks and praise, now and for evermore.

“Our Father which art in heaven,” etc.

Friday Morning.

“ O Lord God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering and abundant in goodness and truth ; thou keepest mercy for thousands ; thou pardonest iniquity and transgression and sin. How excellent is thy loving-kindness, O God ! The children of men shall put their trust under the shadow of thy wings.” And therefore do we still look up to that bountiful hand, from whence we have received all our good things. O Lord our God, be favorable unto us, as thou usest to be unto those that love thy holy name ! O look not upon the sin of our nature, nor the sins of our hearts and lives, which are more than we can remember, and greater than we can express. It is of the Lord’s mercies that we are not consumed, because thy compassions fail not. But thou lookest upon the face of thine Anointed, who was manifested to take away our sins ; by whom it is that we have the access unto the Majesty on high.

O God, be merciful to us, for his sake whom “ thou hast exalted to be a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance ” unto thy people, “ and forgiveness of sins.” O heal our backslidings ; renew us to repentance ; establish our hearts in thy fear and love ; and establish our goings in thy way, that our footsteps slip not.

Seeing there is in Christ Jesus an infinite fullness of all that we can want or wish, O that we may all receive of his fullness, and grace for grace ; to pardon our sins, and subdue our iniquities ; to justify our persons and sanctify our souls ; and to complete that

holy change, that renewal of our hearts, whereby we may be transformed into that blessed image wherein thou didst create us. O make us all meet to be partakers of the inheritance of thy saints in light.

And teach us, O God, to use this world without abusing it ; and to receive the things needful for the body, without losing our part in thy love, which is better than life itself. Whatever we have of this world, O may we have the same with thy leave and love, sanctified to us by the word of God and by prayer, and by the right improvement thereof to thy glory. And whatever we want of worldly things, leave us not destitute of the “ things that accompany salvation ;” but adorn our souls with all such graces of thy Holy Spirit, that we may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things.

*[The Church Militant—The World Lying in Wick-
edness.]*

And now that thou hast renewed our lives and thy mercies to us this morning, help us to renew our desires and resolutions, and endeavors to live in obedience to thy holy will. O restrain us from the sins into which we are prone to fall, and quicken us to the duties we are averse to perform ; and grant that we may think and speak, and will and do, the things becoming the children of our heavenly Father ; and so find the strong consolation of thy gracious acceptance in Jesus Christ our Saviour, who, when we pray, has taught us to say,

“ Our Father which art in heaven,” etc.

.Friday Evening.

O Lord, thou wast before all, thou art above all, and thy years shall not fail. Of thy loving-kindnesses there is no number. Thou still callest us to return to thee ; and "whosoever cometh to thee, thou wilt in nowise cast out." O meet us with thy heavenly grace, that we may be able to come to thee. Be thou graciously pleased to stretch forth thy hand, and loose the chains wherewith our souls are entangled. O free us from every weight of sin, and from every yoke of bondage. O help us to feel, and bewail, and forsake all our sins ; and let us never want the comfortable assurance of thy forgiveness of them, thy acceptance of us, and thy love to us, in the blessed Son of thy eternal love.

Thou art never weary, O Lord, of doing us good : let us never be weary of doing thee service. But, as thou hast pleasure in the prosperity of thy servants, so let us take pleasure in the service of our Lord, and abound in thy work, and in thy love and praise evermore. O fill up all that is wanting, reform whatever is amiss in us, and perfect the thing that concerneth us. Let the witness of thy pardoning love ever abide in all our hearts. O speak into every one of our souls the peace which passeth all understanding ; and let us always look upon thee as our Father, reconciled to us in Jesus Christ.

In his great name we cry unto thee in behalf of the whole race of mankind. O that all the ends of the earth may see the salvation of our God. Continue thy mercies to the land in which we dwell ;

teach us to know thy will concerning us ; and O turn thou all our hearts unto thee as the heart of one man. Bless our rulers, and grant unto all magistrates and ministers of thy word a continual supply of all the needful gifts and graces of the Holy Spirit. Be thou a Father to the fatherless, a Husband to the widow, a Refuge to the oppressed, a Physician to the sick, a Helper of the friendless, a God of consolation to the sorrowful and distressed. Bless to us whatsoever thou art pleased to allot us, and every thing that befalls us. Make all work for our good, to build us up in thy grace, and to help us on to thy glory.

[Sunday-School Workers—Tract Distributers—The Destitute—The Afflicted.]

Continue thy fatherly care over us this night. O preserve and defend, and bless and keep us, that no evil may befall us, "nor any plague come nigh our dwelling." Give us comfortable sleep to strengthen us for thy service ; and whenever thou callest us to the sleep of death, let us cheerfully resign our spirits into thy hands, through the riches of thy grace, and the worthiness of thy Son, in whose merits and meditation alone we put our trust. And for all that he hath done and suffered for us, to thy name, O blessed God of our salvation, be the praise, and honor, and glory, given by us and all thy people, now and for evermore.

"Our Father which art in heaven," etc.

Saturday Morning.

We present ourselves before thee, O Lord our God, to pay our tribute of prayer and thanksgiving, desiring thee mercifully to accept us and our services through the merits of Jesus Christ. In his great name we come to beg thy pardon and peace, the increase of thy grace, and the tokens of thy love; for we are not worthy of the least of thy mercies: but worthy is the Lamb that was slain to take away the sin of the world; for whose sake thou wilt give us all things.

O merciful Father, regard not what we have done against thee, but what our blessed Saviour hath done for us. Regard not what we have made ourselves, but what He is made unto us of thee our God. O that Christ may be to every one of our souls "wisdom and righteousness, sanctification and redemption;" that his precious blood may cleanse us from all our sins; and that thy Holy Spirit may renew and sanctify our souls. May he crucify our flesh with its affections and lusts, and mortify all our members which are upon earth. O let not "sin reign in our mortal bodies, that we should obey it in the lusts thereof;" but, "being made free from sin, let us be the servants of righteousness." Let us approve our hearts to thee, and let all our ways be pleasing in thy sight.

O teach us to know thee, our God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent; and enable us to do thy will on earth, as it is done in heaven. Give us to fear thee and to love thee, to trust and delight in

thee, and to cleave to thee with full purpose of heart, that no temptations may draw us or drive us from thee ; but that all thy dispensations to us, and thy dealings with us, may be the messengers of thy love to our souls. Quicken us, O Lord, in our dullness, that we may not serve thee in a lifeless and listless manner, but may abound in thy work, and be fervent in spirit, serving the Lord. And make us faithful in all our intercourse with our neighbor, that we may be ready to do good and bear evil, that we may be just and kind, merciful and meek, peaceable and patient, sober and temperate, humble and self-denying, inoffensive and useful in the world ; that so glorifying thee here, we may be glorified with thee in thy heavenly kingdom.

[Peace among Nations—Love among Christians.]

Day by day we magnify thee, O Lord, who makest every day an addition to thy mercies. We bless thee for preserving us the night past, and for the rest thou gavest us therein. O cause us to hear thy loving-kindness in the morning ; for in thee do we trust. Cause us to know the way wherein we should go, for we lift up our souls unto thee. O take not thy Holy Spirit from us ; but direct all our ways to please thee, our God. Help us to see thy power, to own thy presence, to admire thy wisdom, and to love thy goodness in all thy creatures ; and by all, draw our hearts still nearer to thee. This, thy mercy and grace, we beg for ourselves, and all ours and thine every-where in the name of our great Mediator.

“Our Father which art in heaven,” etc.

Saturday Evening.

O Lord our God, thou art infinitely good, and thou hast showed us what is good. Thou sendest out thy light and thy truth, that they may guide us and make plain thy way before our face. Thou givest us many opportunities and advantages, to quicken and further us in thy service. We have "line upon line," and "precept upon precept;" thy messengers early and late to open and apply thy word to call and warn, to direct and exhort us, with all long suffering. But how little have we improved all the precious talents which thou hast put into our hands.

But, O Lord God, enter not thus into judgment with thy servants. Pardon all our contempt of thy word, and our not profiting thereby. And help us for the time to come better to improve the blessed opportunities set before us.

O gracious God, may thy Spirit cause thy word to work thoroughly and successfully in all our hearts. And as we are daily instructed from thy Word how we ought to walk and to please thee, our God, so help us to "walk worthy of the Lord unto all well-pleasing;" increasing in the knowledge and love of thee, and abounding more and more in every good work which is pleasing in thy sight through Jesus Christ.

At his hand, O Lord our God, we beg thy gracious acceptance of our humble praise and thanksgiving for all our blessings, spiritual and temporal, so freely conferred upon us. We praise thee for all the com-

forts and conveniences of this life, and for all the means and hopes of a better ; particularly for what we have received this day ; the food of our souls set before us in thy book of truth, the word of salvation sounding in our ears, and the Spirit of God striving with our hearts. O withdraw not thy tender mercies from us, but still continue thy accustomed goodness, and increase thy grace and heavenly blessings upon us, and rejoice over us to do us good.

As day after day and week after week of our lives passes by, may we be more and more admonished of the shortness of time and the nearness of eternity. Thus may we be more and more impressed with the importance of holy living, and the necessity of being every moment ready for an exchange of worlds.

[Our Relatives—Absent Members of the Family.]

In mercy pass by all which thy most pure and holy eyes have seen amiss in us this day. Forgive the iniquities of our holy things ; overlook all our sins and failings through our great Mediator and Redeemer, who ever lives at thy right hand to make intercession for us. And for Jesus Christ, and all which thou art pleased to give us together with him, "not unto us, O Lord, but unto thy name," be all the praise, and honor, and glory, humbly ascribed by us, and all thy Church, now and for evermore.

"Our Father which art in heaven," etc.

SECOND WEEK.

Sunday Morning.

O thou that hearest prayer, to thee shall all flesh come. Thou art the hope of all the ends of the earth, and of those that are afar off upon the sea.

Encouraged by thy kind invitations, and by thine exceeding great and precious promises, we now come to the throne of grace, and kneel before the Lord our Maker. Thou hast protected us during another night: no evil has happened to us, no plague has come nigh our dwelling; and while many have slept the sleep of death, and others, chastened with severe pain, have been full of tossings to and fro until the morning, we have slept securely.

We have risen with renewed strength to enter upon the duties of the Sabbath. But as we know not what may this day befall us, what snares will be laid for our feet by the craft and subtlety of the devil, or by the deceitfulness of our own hearts; we commend ourselves to thy merciful protection. Thou hast been about our beds, O be about our path; watch over us for good, and compass us about with songs of deliverance. Grant unto us the light and power of the Holy Ghost, that we may clearly perceive our danger, and have strength to resist every solicitation to evil however it may be presented.

And as this is the day which thou hast hallowed and on which thou hast set the seal of thy blessing, may we observe it in thy fear, being in the Spirit on the Lord's day. May it be a day of holy rest and con-

solation to our souls. While we refrain from doing our own ways, or finding our own pleasure, or speaking our own words, may we cultivate a spirit of devotion, and enter into thy courts with thanksgiving and praise. O make us joyful in the house of prayer; and may thine ordinances be indeed means of grace unto us. * May we worship thee in spirit and in truth; and while thy word is read and ministered, may we mark, learn, and inwardly digest it, that it may be to us the engrafted word which is able to save our souls. May we hide it in our heart, that we may not sin against thee, esteeming all thy precepts concerning all things to be right, and hating every false way.

We pray that thy ministers, who labor in word and doctrine, may be endued with power from on high, that they may rightly divide the word of truth, and give to each of their hearers his portion of meat in due season. May they speak boldly as they ought to speak; and may thy word, through their instrumentality, enlighten the simple, and comfort and establish thy people. May it be like seed sown in good ground, bringing forth abundant fruit to the honor and praise of thy name.

Lord, hear our prayers, and let our cry come up before thee. Pardon the imperfections of our holy things. Wash us in the blood of the atonement; and in that blood may we have redemption, even the forgiveness of all our sins.

These mercies, for ourselves, and for all for whom it is our duty to pray, we humbly ask in the name and through the mediation of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Our Father, which art in heaven, etc.

Sunday Evening.

O Lord our heavenly Father, the Creator and Preserver of all mankind, in whom we live, and move, and have our being ; at the close of thine own day, we bow with reverence before thy throne, and pour out our petitions before thee. We desire to approach thy mercy-seat, not trusting in our own righteousness, but in thy manifold and great mercies. O look upon the face of thine Anointed ; and for the sake of Him who ever liveth to make intercession for us, forgive all our sins ; cast them into the depths of the sea ; and let thy love be shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost given unto us. May thy Spirit bear witness with our spirit that we are thy children. May he be within us as a well of water springing up into everlasting life ; and under his sanctifying guidance and control, may all our powers be devoted to thy service ; that whether we eat or drink, or whatever we do, we may do all to the glory of God.

Graciously condescend to bless us as a family. We acknowledge our obligations to thee for our family mercies. May we love thee in return for the love with which thou hast loved us ; and for thy sake may we love each other with a pure heart fervently. May all bitterness and wrath and anger and evil-speaking be put away from us ; and may we be kind one to another, tender-hearted, bearing one another's burdens, so fulfilling the law of Christ. Mercifully supply all our need according to thy riches in glory by Christ Jesus. May all the members of this family be members of thy family. May we be no

more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God. May we be built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone; and at last may we have our home in thy heavenly and eternal temple.

We pray thee to be mindful of our relations according to the flesh. Thou knowest them, O Lord, with all their circumstances and wants: be thou their portion, and the lot of their inheritance. May their souls be precious in thy sight; and may the events of thy providence be sanctified to their present and eternal well-being; that, having served thee and their generation by thy will, they may hereafter inherit everlasting life.

O, Father of mercies, accept our thanksgivings for the blessings of another Sabbath. We owe it to thy goodness that we have been permitted to enjoy the ordinances of thy house. May the word which we have this day heard with our outward ears be grafted inwardly in our hearts. May we not be forgetful hearers, but doers of the word, that we may be blessed in our deed. And may all who have this day enjoyed similar advantages, show by their conduct that they have not received the grace of God in vain.

[*The Church—The Sunday-School.*]

Now may the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with us all. *Amen.*

Monday Morning.

Almighty God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, with reverence we bow at the footstool of thy divine Majesty, and desire to present unto thee our morning sacrifice of praise. Condescend, we beseech thee, graciously to receive it.

We acknowledge ourselves utterly unworthy of the least of all thy mercies ; for we have rebelled against thee. Other lords have had the dominion over us ; and to them, we confess, we have yielded too ready obedience. Hadst thou, O Lord, taken pleasure in our destruction, thou wouldest long ere now have sworn in thy wrath that we should not enter into thy rest. But thou art long-suffering and slow to anger, and therefore thou hast not dealt with us after our sins, neither hast thou rewarded us according to our iniquities. With thee there is mercy, that thou mayest be feared ; and thou art plenteous in redemption, that men may seek unto thee.

Encouraged by thy goodness and faithfulness, we now approach unto thee with confidence ; beseeching thee to pardon our manifold offenses, and to deliver us from the hand of all our spiritual enemies. Being thus restored to thy favor, may we serve thee without fear, in righteousness and holiness before thee, all the days of our life. Grant us grace to perform aright all the duties assigned us by thy providence. Sanctify to us all the occurrences of this day, whether pleasing or painful. Let a deep conviction of the infinite excellence of thy government, and the truth

of thy promises, preserve us from all murmuring, and from all unbelieving fears ; and may our faith and hope in thee be strong and abiding.

As a family, may we dwell together in love. Preserve us from discord and every unhallowed temper. Help us to bear each other's burdens, and give to us the charity which thinketh no evil.

Accept our unfeigned thanks for the mercies of the past night. We bless thee that we yet live, and that no calamity has befallen us. We have had refreshing sleep, and thou hast raised us to the continued enjoyment of thy goodness in the land of the living. Help us to enter upon the labors of another week, earnestly desiring, and steadfastly purposing, to be diligent in business, and fervent in spirit ; so that whether engaged in thy worship, or employed in those worldly duties to which in thy providence we are called, we may serve thee acceptably. May we at all times be enabled to say, This is our rejoicing, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have our conversation in the world.

[*Children—Family Friends—Neighbors.*]

We now humbly solicit thy guardian care this day. Keep us from evil. Preserve us, if it please thee, from all painful occurrences, from disease and death ; and finally, by thy mercy, receive us to everlasting life, through Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour. Amen.

Our Father, which art in heaven, etc.

Monday Evening.

Great art thou, O Lord, and greatly to be feared. Thou art the high and lofty One, that inhabitest eternity, whose name is Holy, and who dwellest in the high and holy place ; yet such is thy condescension, that thou dwellest with him also that is of a contrite spirit. Give us, we pray thee, true humility. Preserve us from deceiving ourselves, and from all the delusions of the wicked one, who blinds the minds of them that believe not. May we know ourselves as thou knowest us ; and may we have habitually such a sense of thy presence as shall keep us from sinning against thee.

Forgive the sins and imperfections of this day. Who can tell how often he offendeth ? for thy commandment is exceeding broad. Thou, O Lord, judgest not according to the sight of the eye, but thou searchest the heart. If this day we have departed from the law of truth, of righteousness, or of love ; if by any act of unfaithfulness we have been the cause of offense either to thy Church or to the world, we humbly beseech thee to pardon us. May any evils consequent on our unfaithfulness be prevented by thy gracious providence and thy Holy Spirit.

We lament our proneness to cleave to the dust : quicken thou us, O Lord, according to thy word. Graciously remove from us the undue influence of the things which are seen, by a lively faith in the existence and importance of those which are not seen. Help us to walk by faith. Raise us nearer and nearer to thyself, and lift us up forever.

Let thy blessing rest, we humbly beseech thee, upon the several members of our family. So far as consists with thy glory, and their own final happiness, we entreat thee to favor them with the blessings of this present life ; but should it please thee to withhold temporal blessings from them, let them richly enjoy those which are spiritual and heavenly. May they all be the faithful servants of Christ ; and at last hear him say, Come, ye blessed children of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. .

Be mindful of all thy people, and keep them from the evil that is in the world. Help them to walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, redeeming the time. In all their afflictions, be to them, as thou hast been to thy people in all generations, the God of all consolation. In all their conflicts give them the victory ; and through thy strength may they be even more than conquerors ; yea, may they always triumph in Christ.

We now commit ourselves to thy guardian care. If it please thee, favor us with refreshing sleep. May no evil be permitted to approach our dwelling. Whether we wake or sleep, may we be alike precious in thy sight, the constant objects of thy providential regard, and partakers of thy sanctifying grace.

These mercies and favors, with all others which thou seest to be needful for us, we humbly ask in the name of our only Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.

“The blessing of God Almighty,” etc.

Tuesday Morning.

Father of mercies, and God of all comfort, suffer us to approach the throne of thy heavenly grace, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ ; and while we engage in the duty of prayer and supplication, let thy Holy Spirit help our infirmities, making intercession in us according to thy will. We are unworthy to come into thy holy presence ; but thou commandest us to make known our requests unto thee ; and hast assured us in thy holy word, that thine ears are open to our prayers. Draw nigh to us in mercy, while we draw nigh to thee in duty. Cause thy face to shine upon thy servants, that we may approach thee with confidence, and with reverence and godly fear.

We bless thy holy name, O Lord our God, for having preserved us through the night that is past from all evil and danger ; and for having raised us in health and strength to see the light of another day. Under thy protection we slept in safety and peace ; and by thy goodness we are still the living to praise thee. Now let the Sun of Righteousness arise upon us with healing in his wings ; and may our path be that of the just, which shineth more and more unto the perfect day.

Grant, O Lord, that we may be so prepared by thy grace for the duties and difficulties of this day, that we may set thee before us in all our works and ways, and honor thee in all we think, or say, or do. May we in our lawful calling labor diligently, that we may provide things honest in the sight of all men. May we be just in all our dealings, and merciful after

our power, still walking humbly with thee. If any man injure us, may we be meek and forgiving ; if we fall into affliction, may we be resigned to thy will ; and amid trials and temptations may we stand fast in the good way of the Lord. When we go out, and when we come in, let thy presence be with us, and thy blessing rest upon us. Keep our minds in peace with thee and with all mankind. Guard us from dangers both seen and unseen ; but especially save us from sin. May our light so shine before men, that they may see our good works, and glorify thee, our heavenly Father.

Bless all our relations and friends with the wisdom which is profitable to direct, and with that holiness which shall prepare them for seeing thy face with joy. May we and they walk as guided by thy counsel, and thus may our union increase more and more, until it be perfected in the world to come.

[The Church—Our Country—Our Rulers.]

And now, heavenly Father, be mindful of us who are here bowed at thy footstool. Enlighten our darkness, pardon our sins, cleanse us from all unrighteousness. We are of ourselves entire weakness ; but in thee we have both righteousness and strength. Strengthen us, we beseech thee, for all thy will, whether we be called to do or to suffer it. Hear us, O Lord, in these our prayers and supplications, and mercifully supply all our need, through Jesus Christ our adorable Lord and Saviour. Amen.

“ Our Father which art in heaven,” etc.

Tuesday Evening.

Almighty and ever-blessed Lord God, by whose providence we have been safely brought to the conclusion of another day ; graciously accept our praises and thanksgivings for this renewed instance of thy goodness. This day thou hast given us our daily bread. By thy watchful care our health has been preserved, and our lives have been spared. What shall we render unto thee, O Lord, for these thy benefits to us ? We would take the cup of salvation and call upon thy name ; and while now we call upon thee in simplicity and godly sincerity, hear and answer the humble supplication which we offer up in the name of our great High-Priest. He ever liveth to make intercession for us, and him thou hearest always. For his sake show us thy mercy, and grant us thy salvation, and may we live with thee in that day which will never be followed by night.

Whatever thou hast this day seen amiss in us, whether in thought, or word, or deed, mercifully forgive ; and wash us in the fountain which thou hast opened for sin and uncleanness, that we may ever hereafter live to thy honour and glory. We humbly confess our want of spirituality and heavenly-mindedness ; but thou art rich in mercy unto all them that call upon thee. Give us true repentance, and strengthen us by thy grace to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ with the heart unto righteousness, that we may be accepted in the beloved, and have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of our sins. - And may it please thee to cleanse our

hearts that we may love thee, who art infinitely great and good, with all our heart, and with all our soul, and with all our strength.

Let thy Holy Spirit dwell in our hearts, that he may guide us into all truth : and may the holy Scriptures, given by his inspiration, be a lamp to our feet, and a light to our paths, that we may be thoroughly furnished unto every good work. Make the means of grace wells of salvation to us, and may we draw water from them with joy. Bless us with the spirit of watchfulness and courage, that we may be neither surprised nor overcome by our spiritual adversaries ; but warring a good warfare, may we be faithful unto death, and receive the crown of life.

May that mind be in us which was in Christ Jesus, that we may be enabled to imitate him, who left us an example that we should follow his steps. Like him may we be humble, and gentle, and meek ; pitiful and kind to all that are in adversity, and ever ready to forgive them that trespass against us. Give us his sacred zeal for thy cause and glory ; may our spirits be deeply affected by the sin, and wretchedness, and danger of others ; and as we have opportunity may we rejoice to do them good. And when we are called to pass from time into eternity, may we be enabled, in the full confidence of faith, to commit our departing spirits into thy hands, who hast redeemed us, O Lord God of truth.

Mercifully prepare us for the hour of death, whensoever it shall come. May we die in peace with thee, and with all mankind.

“ The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,” etc.

Wednesday Morning.

Almighty God, our heavenly Father, we bring to thee our humble and united thanks for the mercies of another night. Thou hast holden our souls in life, and preserved our dwelling in peace. Through thy watchful providence, neither wicked men nor evil spirits have been permitted to harm us ; we have slept in safety, for thou, O Lord, hast sustained us. May our hearts be suitably affected by thy goodness, and may we rededicate our souls and bodies to thy service. Give unto us thy grace, that we may henceforth lead a sober, righteous, and godly life. Vouchsafe to us thy Holy Spirit, to enlighten our darkness, and to strengthen our weakness.

Help us to watch and pray, that we enter not into temptation. Save us from committing any sin, and from neglecting any duty. Preserve our minds in a calm and spiritual frame. Let us not forget that thine eyes are always upon us ; that thou observest us in all our works ; and that there is not a word in our tongue but lo, O Lord, thou knowest it altogether. Help us so to live as always to have a conscience void of offense toward thee and toward all men. May we be just and upright in all our dealings ; may we make thy holy word the rule of our practice ; and may no temptation to depart from its direction ever prevail against us. While engaged in our worldly business, and fulfilling the duties of the present life, may we set our affections on the things which are above, and steadily seek them according to thy will. Show us the vanity of the world, and

the value of time, and help us to improve every moment to thy glory. Let no corrupt communication proceed out of our mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace to the hearers. May foolish talking and jesting, lying, and all evil-speaking, be far from us. Cleanse thou us from secret faults ; keep back thy servants, also from presumptuous sins ; let them not have dominion over us ; but let the words of our mouth, and the meditations of our heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, our strength and our Redeemer.

O God, we humbly pray that nothing in this world, its joys or its sorrows, may have power to draw our hearts away from thee. Deliver us from pride and envy, and from a worldly, selfish spirit. May we love thee with all our heart, and our neighbor as ourself. May we have grace to confess Christ before men. Inspire us with that zeal and courage which no temptation to shame or cowardice shall have power to overcome. If called to suffer reproach or loss for the cause of Christ, may our spirit be meek and gentle, but steadfast and unmoved. Save us from all immoderate care and anxiety about the things of this life. Let no murmuring thoughts possess our heart ; but in all things may we have an entire resignation to thy holy will. Pardon, we beseech thee, our manifold offenses, for the sake of Christ, who is the propitiation for our sins ; and quicken, illuminate, and sanctify our souls.

“ Our Father which art in heaven,” etc.

Wednesday Evening.

O merciful God, grant us, we pray thee, the assistance of thy Holy Spirit, that we may now draw near to thee, and find acceptance through our Lord Jesus Christ. We thank thee for thy continual care and watchful providence ; for the preservation of our life and health, and for the supply of our wants : but more especially we praise thee for those spiritual blessings which thou hast provided for us in Christ Jesus ; for the glorious work of our redemption, for the gift of thy Holy Spirit, for the means of grace, and for the promise of eternal life. We acknowledge that we are unworthy of the least of thy mercies. We have not been sufficiently grateful for them all. Give unto us true repentance. Take away our unbelief ; increase our faith. Help us, that we may believe with the heart unto righteousness, and with the mouth make confession unto salvation. Send down upon us the Spirit of adoption. May Christ continually dwell in our hearts, and the life we now live in the flesh be by the faith of the Son of God, who loved us, and gave himself for us. Let not sin of any kind have dominion over us. Help us to lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and to run with patience the race that is set before us. Endue us with wisdom, that we may not be ignorant of the devices of Satan ; and strengthen us that we may resist and overcome all his temptations. Increase our love to thy blessed word. Write thy laws upon our hearts.

We beseech thee to sanctify to us all our enjoyments

and all our privations. Impress our minds with a sense of the vanity and uncertainty of all earthly things. So teach us to number our days that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.

O God, we desire to close this day in the enjoyment of thy favor, and with the good hope of future glory. Forgive all our sins, and lift up the light of thy countenance upon us. Defend us this night from all evil. May we all be under thy gracious protection ; and if thou art pleased to add another day to our lives, may it be spent to thy honor and praise.

We implore thy blessing upon all our relatives and friends. Have mercy upon such as are yet ignorant of the saving power of thy truth, and out of the way of righteousness. Awaken them to a sense of their danger, and bring them to thyself by Jesus Christ. We commend to thy blessing all institutions designed to promote the interests of Christ's Church upon earth. Especially we pray that great success may accompany all missionary efforts. Preserve the lives of thy servants who preach the Gospel to the heathen. Aid them in the acquirement of difficult languages ; open before them doors of usefulness ; and make them the instruments of turning many to righteousness. Raise up a succession of faithful laborers for thy Church, and send forth thy messengers to a guilty but redeemed world.

Bless the nation in which, by thy providence, our lot is cast. Multiply the number of believers ; revive and prosper thy work ; and thus may glory dwell in our land.

“The blessing of God Almighty,” etc.

Thursday Morning.

Almighty God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, behold us, thy unworthy servants, now prostrate before thy throne of grace. Give thy Holy Spirit to help our infirmities. May he teach us how to pray as we ought, making intercession according to the will of God. Cause a solemn sense of thy presence to fill our hearts; and let our morning sacrifice, sanctified by the Holy Ghost, and offered through thy well-beloved Son, be acceptable in thy sight.

We thank thee, O God, for all the mercies which have been so freely bestowed upon us. Blessed be the Lord, who daily loadeth us with benefits, even the God of our salvation. We gratefully acknowledge that all we enjoy comes from thee. In thee we live and move and have our being. Thou art gracious and full of compassion, slow to anger, and of great mercy. Thou art good to all, and thy tender mercies are over all thy works. The eyes of all wait upon thee, and thou givest them their meat in due season. Thou openest thine hand, and satisfiest the desire of every living thing. Thou commandest us to love thee with all our heart; and thy commandment is holy and just and good. Help us to set the Lord always before us, and to rely with unshaken confidence on the word of our faithful Creator and most bountiful Benefactor. And we would especially remember, that herein is thy love manifested, that thou didst send thy Son to be the propitiation for our sins, and the Saviour of the world. O, let us feel the power of thy love, that whether we live, we may

live unto thee, or whether we die, we may die unto thee ; so that, living or dying, we may be the Lord's.

We thank thee, O Lord, for thy exceeding great and precious promises. Help us to remember that through them we may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through unholy desires and affections. Thou commandest us to be holy in all manner of conversation : O God, give us grace to fulfill what thou commandest. Cleanse us from all unrighteousness ; sanctify us wholly ; from all filthiness, and from all idols, do thou cleanse us.

And we pray that thou wouldest be pleased to pour out thy Spirit plentifully upon thy Church. Keep thy ministers as stars in thy right hand. May they shine as lights of the world, and turn many to righteousness. Help us to profit by their labors, and not receive the grace of God in vain. Hasten the coming of thy kingdom. May the Gospel be soon preached in all nations for a testimony unto them ; and may all the ends of the earth see the salvation of God.

[*Friends—Children—Servants.*]

Hear our prayers, O God, in behalf of our country. Bless our rulers. Have mercy upon the sick and the afflicted, the poor and needy. May pure and undefiled religion prosper among us ; and, from the least unto the greatest, may all know the Lord.

“Our Father which art in heaven,” etc.

Thursday Evening.

Almighty God, our heavenly Father, accept our unfeigned thanks for all the mercies of another day. We acknowledge ourselves indebted to thee for thy continued care, and for all the blessings of thy providence and grace. Thy good hand has been upon us. Thou hast seen our going out and our coming in. Thou hast known the thoughts and intents of our hearts. Nothing that we have done has escaped thy searching eye. Whatsoever thou hast seen in us this day contrary to thy holy law, we beseech thee, for thy Son's sake, abundantly to pardon. And give us wisdom and strength, that we may both know and do thy will, and in all things glorify thy name.

We bless thee, O God, that thou hast invited us to come boldly to the throne of grace. We rejoice in the new and living way into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, and that we have a High Priest over the house of God. By the way which he has consecrated for us, we now desire to draw near to thee. Enable us to come with a true heart, and in full assurance of faith to receive thy blessing and to do thy will.

Be very gracious, we entreat thee, to all our relatives and friends. Incline their hearts to seek thy face and keep thy law. Save them from forgetting thee. Give them all things pertaining to life and godliness. Lead them in the good and right way, and bring them to eternal life.

We beseech thee to hear us in behalf of thy Church. Give to all thy people increase of grace, that they may be more effectually and more exten-

sively the light of the world, and the salt of the earth. We pray especially for the Church of which we ourselves are members. Bless thy servants who labor among us in word and doctrine. Under their ministrations may we grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. More abundantly qualify them for the work to which thou hast called them, and may thy word, as ministered by them, have free course and be glorified. O, let the dew of thy blessing ever rest upon Zion.

We would also earnestly pray for thy servants who have gone into distant lands to preach among the nations the unsearchable riches of Christ. Be thou their comfort and support. Give them favor in the sight of the people. Open for them in every place a great and effectual door, which no adversary shall be able to shut. May the blessed Bible be published in every language, and disseminated in every land. May the worship of false gods be abandoned. May every idol temple be overthrown, and may all forms of heathen superstition vanish like the mists of the morning before the light of truth.

[Sunday-Schools—Bible study—The call of laborers into the vineyard of the Lord.]

And now, O Lord, we commit ourselves to thy gracious protection. O thou keeper of Israel, defend us from all the perils of the night; and whether we sleep or wake, whether we live or die, make us thine own, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

“May the blessing of God Almighty,” etc.

Friday Morning.

Eternal God, we, thine unworthy servants, would yield ourselves body and soul unto thee, acknowledging all thy benefits which thou hast conferred upon us. In thee we live, and move, and have our being : all our springs of blessing are in thee. We adore thee as the Father of our spirits, the former of our bodies, the benefactor of our lives, and the bountiful giver of all that we enjoy.

Through another night thou hast preserved us, and we are the living to praise thee this morning. In thy fear may we go forth to engage in the active duties of life. Help us to acknowledge thee in all our ways, to set thee always before us, and to stand perfect and complete in all thy will. May we do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with our God ; and whether we eat or drink, or whatever we do, may we do all in the name of our Lord Jesus, giving thanks unto God and our Father by him.

We know not what a day may bring forth ; but we know that thou carest for us, and that nothing shall harm us if we be followers of that which is good. Deliver us from the snares of Satan, from the love of the world, and from the lusts of the flesh, which war against the soul. May we take unto ourselves the whole armor of God, pray without ceasing, and hold fast the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end.

As a family, may we see thy goodness, and show forth thy praise in the land of the living. Strengthen, and cheer, and guide us ; teach us thy will concern-

ing us, and be with us in all our ways. May we have food and raiment convenient for us. If it please thee, prolong our lives, and continue our health. May the cloud of thy presence overshadow us ; may the arms of thy love surround us ; and may all our acts please thee. Constantly may we hear the words of Christ, What is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? O, may purity and meekness, humility and benevolence, imbue our spirit ; may integrity be stamped upon all our conduct ; may we be earnestly engaged in following after holiness ; and may we account nothing dear to ourselves, that we may finish our course with joy.

We commend our relatives and friends to thy mercy and favor. May their names and our names be written in the book of life ; and may we all find mercy of the Lord in that day when we shall appear before the throne of his glory.

Establish our nation in righteousness. Bless our Chief Magistrate, and all who are in authority in various branches of our national and State governments. Uphold all the interests of our country, civil and religious. May wisdom and knowledge be the stability of our times. May thy work be revived in the midst of the years, and the whole earth be filled with thy glory.

Hear us in these our prayers which we humbly present unto thee. Hear us, O God, for the sake of thy Son, who was delivered for our offenses, raised again for our justification, and who ever liveth to make intercession for us.

“Our Father which art in heaven,” etc.

Friday Evening.

O God, our heavenly Father, we bow at thy footstool to acknowledge thy great mercies, to confess our sins, and to close the day with acts of humiliation, thanksgiving, and prayer.

We devoutly thank thee for the care of thy good providence to the present hour. Thou, who numberest the hairs of our head, hast supplied our wants, and shielded us from the stroke of death. Be pleased, of thy great kindness, thus to watch over us for good all the days and nights of our uncertain pilgrimage here on earth ; and with all thy blessings give us a heart to fear and love thee, and diligently to live after thy commandments.

Assist us this night, O holy and righteous Lord, to try our ways by the sure standard of thy perfect law. Yea, do thou thyself carry this bright light into the chamber of our heart, and search out, in order to their destruction, all our secret sins. We rejoice that to them who are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit, the law is no longer a minister of terror, or a yoke of bondage. Thou hast placed it in the ark of the new and better covenant, and spread over it the covering of perfect propitiation. We honor the law as the scepter of our Saviour's righteous rule ; and would bind it round us as the badge of our willing and grateful subjection to him who is our Prophet, Priest, and King. O Lord God, who didst of old engrave it on the tables of stone, and didst in the last days, by the lips of thy Son, open its fullness, apply it in its spiritual meaning

and broad extent, and declare its unchanging authority: we beseech thee, according to thy promise, put it into our hearts, and may we perfectly love thee, and worthily magnify thy holy name.

Forgive the sins we have committed by word, or thought, or deed. If we have envied the lot of others, or wickedly repined at our own; if by negligence, indolence, or willful disobedience, we have grieved thy Holy Spirit, O Lord, pardon thy servants. Cleanse our hearts from every affection contrary to charity, meekness, and purity. May we cherish no sinful resentment, but lay ourselves down at peace with thee, and forgiving others as we trust that thou for Christ's sake wilt forgive us.

Pity and succor all who are destitute of food, shelter, and friends; all who are exposed to peril by land or by water; all who are near unto death. Bless all the ministers of thy Gospel with grace, wisdom, and understanding. And on all the Israel of God, wherever they dwell, and however they are named, may mercy and peace rest, from God our Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ.

[*Christian Missions—Institutions of Learning.*]

Defend us during the darkness and dangers of this night; and when the shadows of death gather and settle upon our path, then, O gracious Father, lighten our darkness by thy presence, and receive our sanctified spirits to thine eternal rest, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

“The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,” etc.

Saturday Morning.

Almighty and eternal God, the giver and preserver of life, thou hast guarded us through another night, so that we have not slept the sleep of death. With the morning the tokens of thy kindness have returned ; our eyes behold the light ; we are supplied with food convenient for us ; thou crownest our life with goodness. With prostrate hearts, as well as with bended knees, we now offer our morning worship to thine infinite majesty. Give us, by faith in our Saviour's meditation, entrance into the heavenly sanctuary, and enable us to approach thee acceptably.

We adore thee for the bounties of thy providence by which we live. We thank thee for thy rich and varied temporal gifts ; but our acknowledgment of thy loving-kindness would be poor indeed if we could forget thy mercy to our guilty souls. Thou hast given thine only Son to redeem and save our sinful race. When, through natural corruption and willful sin, we were deeply sunk in that wickedness which pollutes the world, thou didst give us to know our sinfulness and danger ; and redemption in the blood of Christ, the forgiveness of our sins, was mercifully offered to us. We thank thee for the knowledge of thyself, and of the Saviour who died for us, which we possess. We bless thee that thou didst not so punish our neglect of thine offered mercy as to refuse all further offers. We thank thee most heartily that thou art inclining us to seek thy face. For thy Son's sake accept us now. Give to us that dearest and best token of thy love, the Holy Spirit. May he

renew our souls in thine image, assure us of our adoption into thy family, and create in us all the gracious affections which belong to thy children. Beginning this day in thy fear and love, let us be kept in thy charge through the whole of it ; and may the saving strength of thy right hand, O God, preserve us. Thou knowest the way that we take ; thou knowest into what intercourse with the world we shall be brought ; to what trials we shall be subject, and to what snares exposed. Hold us up that we may be safe, and that we may have respect unto thy statutes continually. Give us uprightness of heart, that we may hate every false way. And as without thee we can do nothing, but our holiest purposes will be broken unless we are succored by thy grace, have mercy upon us, we beseech thee, and incline our hearts to keep thy law.

Hear our prayers, most gracious God, on behalf of others. Bless our friends. Let all connected with us by the ties of earthly relationship, or by intimacy and friendship, be members of thy family, partakers of thy grace, objects of thy care, and finally inheritors with us of everlasting life.

[Our Country—The Nations of the Earth.]

May the Church of Christ, which he hath purchased with his own blood, receive more abundant effusions of grace from its glorious Head. Cleanse it from all envy and uncharitableness, from bitterness and all evil speaking, and unite all its members in truth and love.

“Our Father which art in heaven,” etc.

Saturday Evening.

Great and everlasting God, we once more kneel before thee, in whose hand our breath is, and whose are all our ways. In the morning we sought thy protection, and it has not been withheld. Thou hast brought us to the close of another week, and hast been our defense amid all the dangers which surround us. We bless thee for thy goodness and forbearance.

Create in us a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within us. Fill our renewed souls with thy perfect love, and make an end of sin. Unite us closely and intimately to thyself, the source of spiritual life, the fountain of wisdom and strength. Arm us completely for the conflict with our spiritual enemies ; give us a spirit of continual watchfulness and of unyielding fortitude, and may our foes never conquer us again. Strengthen and animate us in the pursuit of holiness. Arouse us to desire it by lively apprehensions of its beauty. Make us anxious to be holy, for that thou the Lord our God art holy.

We are now about to retire to rest. Should evil spirits or bad men meditate evil against us, we beseech thee to turn it aside. May we sleep in quiet, overshadowed by thy care ; and in the morning, when we awake, may we still be with thee. Give us rightly to perceive thy design in hallowing the day of rest. Even now, so disengage our minds from worldly objects, and relieve our hearts from worldly care, that our earliest thoughts in the morning may be full of thee. May we be eminently in the Spirit on the

Lord's day ; may it be a delight to us ; and through its consecrated hours may we sit in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. As conqueror, O Christ, ride thou into the midst of thine enemies ; lead crowds of thy redeemed creatures into thy Church : and hold them in willing and rejoicing subjection to thyself forever.

Be gracious to all who are afflicted. May they who in the course of this night sleep their last sleep fall asleep in Jesus. And O prepare us for the last day of our life, whenever that may come. When our Lord shall summon us to meet him, may we be found ready, that we may go forth with holy joy, being found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless. And when time shall be no more, may we inherit the kingdom prepared from the foundation of the world for all them that love thee. Keep our faith in active exercise. To our enlarged and enlightened view, let the world above, and the things of heaven, be laid open ; and as the vision of the eternal world approaches and brightens, stir us up, we entreat thee, to seek greater purity of heart, and to labor in thy service with more diligence and faithfulness. O God, help us so to live in time that we may dwell with thee throughout eternity. Dispose our hearts to those meditations and studies that shall tend to purify our affections and to profit our souls. May we increase in Christian knowledge and in spirituality of mind. Laying aside all worldliness of feeling and of desire, may we be perfectly conformed to thy holy will, and thus fitted for the inheritance of the saints in light.

"The blessing of God Almighty," etc.

THIRD WEEK.

Sunday Morning.

O God, who hast graciously preserved us during the past night, and brought us in safety and peace to the beginning of this day, assist us by thy Holy Spirit, that we may rejoice in the return of that season which thou hast set apart for thy more especial service. Grant that we may rightly value and use our manifold advantages, and that we may this day attend upon thee without distraction.

As thou didst on the first Sabbath rest from all thy work which thou hadst made, and didst bless and sanctify the day for the benefit of man, so we may at this time follow the divine example, and keep a day of holy rest unto thee. May the Sabbath be to us a delight, the holy of the Lord, and honorable; and, O help us to honor thee in it, not doing our own ways, nor finding our own pleasure, nor speaking our own words. Hallow our thoughts, purify our desires and affections, and cause our souls to seek their rest in thee; for thou hast dealt bountifully with us.

Quicken us by the Spirit of thy grace, that as on the first Lord's day our Saviour Jesus Christ rose again from the dead, according to the Scripture, so we may this day rise from the death of sin to the life of righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. Strengthen our faith in our crucified and risen Redeemer, and through the exercise of it convey to us the unspeakable blessings of pardon, and holiness, and abiding tranquillity. May we seek those things that are above, where Christ sitteth on thy right hand; and

like as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so may we also, raised by the same glorious power, and delivered from the law of sin and death, walk in newness of life, to the glory of thy holy name.

Prepare us, O Lord, for that eternal Sabbath which thou hast promised to thy faithful people. O give us the Sabbath of thy love ; and in all our services, whether public or private, let us find that it is good for us to draw near to thee.

Bless thy servants who this day publish the word of life. O thou fountain of mercy and wisdom, enlighten their understanding ; sanctify their affections ; deliver them from the fear of man, which bringeth a snare ; and unite in them a holy fidelity to thee, with a yearning pity for mankind. May their doctrine drop as the rain, and their speech distill as the dew ; and may they be messengers of grace and truth to all that hear them. Give us increase of grace to hear meekly thy word, to receive it with pure affection, and to bring forth the fruits of the Spirit. Suit the lessons of thy word and will to us all, in what our several states may require. Awaken, convince, comfort, and guide the many subjects of our prayers ; and cause us and them to partake of all the mercies which thou hast so plentifully provided for us in Christ Jesus.

Hear these our united supplications, O Lord, and graciously answer them according to the good pleasure of thy goodness, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

“ Our Father, which art in heaven,” etc.

Sunday Evening.

Receive, O Lord, our humble thanksgivings for the care which thou hast extended over us this day ; and for the blessings, temporal and spiritual, which thou hast caused us richly to enjoy. We especially acknowledge thy mercy as discovered to us in the ministry of thy word, and the other ordinances of thy sanctuary. We trust that from our hearts we can say, How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts ; a day in thy courts is better than a thousand. We beseech thee to enlighten our minds by the teaching of thy Spirit, that we may obtain a larger measure of the wisdom which is unto salvation. Impart to us the heavenly gift, and make us partakers of the Holy Ghost, that we may taste the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come. Through faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, may we continually possess a satisfactory sense of thy fatherly love to us. Endue us plentifully with thy grace, that we may walk worthy of the Lord unto all well-pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God.

Prosper the work of thy servants who have this day published in thy name the words of eternal life. Save them from discouragement and fear. Pour upon them the spirit of grace and supplication, and assist them to commend their work to thee in humble faith. Bless all who have this day heard thy word. So may they mark, learn, and inwardly digest its sacred instructions, that they may walk in all wis-

dom and truth, serving thee in holiness and righteousness, all the days of their life.

[*Sunday-Schools—Children—Friends.*]

Forgive, O Father of mercies, whatever thou hast this day seen amiss in us. We humbly beseech thee, for thy Son, our Lord Jesus Christ's sake, to pardon all that is past. Give us thy grace that we may perfectly love thee, and worthily magnify thy holy name. Save us from sin; make us perfect in every good work to do thy will; and continually work in us that which is well-pleasing in thy sight, through Jesus Christ to whom be glory for ever and ever.

Take us this night into thy holy care and protection. Give us refreshing sleep; and if it please thee to spare us until the light of another day, let us awake and arise with thee, and rejoice to run our renewed course under thy guidance and blessing.

We will both lay us down in peace, and sleep; for thou, Lord, only makest us to dwell in safety. And do thou mercifully prepare us for our final change, that when the hour of our mortal rest shall come, we may resign our spirits into thy hands, and lay down our bodies in the grave, there to sleep in Jesus, until, at the last day, they shall awake to glory and honor and immortality.

We bless thee, O thou giver of good, for all thy goodness and mercy. Have us still in thy holy keeping, and cause thy grace to abound toward us, through Jesus Christ, our Mediator and Redeemer. Amen.

“May the peace of God,” etc.

Monday Morning.

O God, we beseech thee to strengthen us by thy grace, that we may reverently draw nigh to thy mercy-seat, and worship thee in spirit and in truth. We joyfully adore thy glorious name, we acknowledge thy goodness in creating us in thine own image, redeeming us by the gift of thy only begotten Son, preserving us by thine almighty power, and sustaining us by thy ceaseless bounty. That we may approach thee with that filial confidence, show us again the tokens of thy fatherly love; and let us rejoice to know, by the inward testimony of adoption into thy family, that thou hast indeed blotted out our sin, and pardoned our numberless transgressions. And let thy presence abide with us.

O thou that dwellest between the cherubim, shine forth; and let the light of thy countenance comfort and cheer us through the day, to the beginning of which, by thy watchful goodness, we are safely brought.

Suffer not the things of the present life to weaken the impression made upon our minds by the hallowed exercises and enjoyments of the Lord's day.

Prepare us this day, in our dealings with others, to manifest the mind that was in Christ, and preserve us from anger, malice, pride, and every evil temper. Enable us to love our neighbor as ourselves; that all things that we would wish others to do unto us, we may even so do unto them. Preserve us from those enticements to sinful gratification to which intercourse with worldly men may expose us. While

thankful for all comforts which thou givest us in our present state, dispose our heart to seek happiness in thee alone. Help us to watch and pray, that we enter not into temptation, but, carefully abstaining from even the appearance of evil, let our light so shine before men, that, seeing our good works, they may glorify our Father which is in heaven.

Enable us to bear with patience any disappointments or trials that may this day befall us. If it please thee, preserve us from severe afflictions; but whatsoever may be thy will concerning us, always enable us to trust in thee, O Lord, and to wait patiently on thee; steadfastly believing that though clouds and darkness encompass thee, righteousness and judgment are the habitation of thy throne. Ever sanctify thy chastening to our good, and satisfy us with the peaceable fruit of righteousness.

Graciously hear our prayer; O God, on behalf of all those to whom we are united by the ties of kindred and friendship. Bless them, we beseech thee, with pardon and peace in this life, and receive them hereafter to thine eternal glory. Mercifully grant that we and ours, however separated by thy providence in the present world, may severally in our allotted stations perform thy wise and gracious will, and finally join the blessed family that shall surround thy throne forever.

We again beseech thee, heavenly Father, to be with us throughout the day, guiding, comforting, and saving us, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

“Our Father which art in heaven,” etc.

Monday Evening.

Almighty and everlasting God, who art the Creator and Preserver of all mankind, graciously accept our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving for the protection and blessings vouchsafed to us another day. Goodness and mercy have followed us all the days of our life. Thy good providence has watched over us, and kept us from harm, while we have pursued the duties of our calling, and we are now permitted, in peace and safety, to unite in our accustomed worship. For this added proof of thy fatherly care, and for all the mercies of the day, we render thee our humble and most hearty thanks.

Enable us, we pray thee, to withdraw our minds from worldly things, and to wait upon thee with calmness and with confidence.

O God, dispose our minds profitably to meditate upon the shortness and uncertainty of time. As day after day expires, may we more clearly perceive, and more strongly feel, the nearness of eternity. O thou that inhabitest eternity, impress us more deeply with a desire after heavenly things, and fully prepare us for our latter end. When the night of death overtakes us, may we be found ready. May the great work for which thou hast sent us into the world, and for the accomplishment of which thou dost still mercifully lengthen out our day of grace, then be found perfect and complete. At length may we die triumphant in thy love, and enter into the joy of our Lord.

O merciful Father, who hatest nothing that thou

hast made, and whose tender mercies are over all thy works, graciously hear us while we again make prayer and supplication for all men. Let our friends and relatives experience thy mercy in all that relates to the body and the soul. May our enemies be reconciled to thee by the death of thy Son; and do thou save them and us from hatred, and malice, and all uncharitableness. And let thy saving health be made known unto all nations. May the universal reign of Christ over the hearts of men speedily take place. O Thou, in whose sight a thousand years are but as a day, graciously strengthen us vigorously to exert ourselves in the short time allotted to us on earth to promote among men the cause of the Redeemer. Make us instruments in thine hands for saving souls from death; and give us faith to rejoice in the expectation of that period when, in the salvation of all the ends of the earth, he who made atonement for the world shall see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied.

*[Our Children—Our Family Friends—Our Neighbors
—Our Enemies.]*

And now, O God, we commend ourselves again to thy kind care and protection, knowing that he who keepeth Israel neither slumbereth nor sleepeth, and that the darkness and the light are both alike to thee.

“The blessing of God Almighty, the Father,” etc.

Tuesday Morning.

Thine, O Lord, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty ; for all that is in the heaven and in the earth is thine. Thou art our Father and our Redeemer, and we are all the work of thine hand. Thou doest good to all, giving rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness. Thy mercy is in the heavens, and thy faithfulness reacheth unto the clouds. Thy righteousness is like the great mountains ; thy judgments are a great deep. O Lord, thou preservest man and beast.

We thank thee, O Lord, for thy protecting care over us the past night ; for bringing us to see the light of another day ; for preserving us in health, and in the use of the powers of our body and the faculties of our mind. Thou hast made us dwell in safety, and we are the living to praise thee this day. O God, it is a good thing to give thanks unto thee, and to sing praises unto thy name, O thou Most High ; to show forth thy loving-kindness in the morning, and thy faithfulness every night.

May we now be justified freely by thy grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. O, send forth the Spirit of thy Son into our hearts, crying, Abba, Father. May the Spirit itself bear witness with our spirit that we are the children of God ; so that this day, and all the days of our life, we may walk in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost.

Help us, we beseech thee, to remember, through all

this day, that thou God seest us. Enable us to keep our hearts with all diligence, and to watch over every thought and temper, every word and action.

We pray thee to regard the poor, the destitute, and the stranger, the widow, and the fatherless. In time of tribulation lead them to seek thy face ; and cause them to find the blessedness of them that are chastened and instructed out of thy law.

Bless, we pray thee, the universal Church. May the voice of rejoicing and salvation be heard in all the tabernacles of Zion. May her priests be clothed with righteousness, and may all thy saints shout aloud for joy. Arise, O God our King, and have mercy upon her, and let the time to favor her quickly come. Build up the breaches of Zion, and restore all her wanderers. O Lord, revive thy work ; in the midst of the years make known ; in wrath remember mercy. Bless all Christian missionary societies. We beseech thee to give wisdom and counsel to those by whom their affairs are overseen and directed ; and to the missionaries themselves, and their families, vouchsafe protection and peace. Make thy servants useful in turning many to righteousness, and in spreading the light of thy truth among all the nations of the earth. Hasten the conversion of the world : from the rising of the sun to the going down of the same, let thy name be great among the Gentiles, that in every place incense may be offered to thee, and a pure offering ; even the sacrifice of praise, and thanksgiving, and holiness, acceptable to thee by Christ Jesus our Lord.

“Our Father which art in heaven,” etc.

Tuesday Evening.

Who is like unto thee, O Lord ? glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders. Thou art the Lord, the Lord of hosts, the First and the Last ; and beside thee there is no God. Justice and judgment are the habitation of thy throne ; mercy and truth go before thy face. Thou art God, ready to pardon, gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness. Thou art the refuge and strength of thy people ; and thou wilt never forsake them that put their trust in thee. O Lord our heavenly Father, who humblest thyself to behold the things that are on earth, help us to approach now the throne of grace. O, give us thy Holy Spirit to help our infirmities. We know not what we should pray for as we ought : may the Spirit himself make intercession for us with groanings that cannot be uttered.

Send us the Spirit of adoption, witnessing with our spirit that we are thy children, creating in us all filial dispositions and tempers, inclining and enabling us henceforth to be followers of God as dear children, always to walk in truth, and purity, and love. Save us, we beseech thee, O Lord, from the power of Satan, who desireth to have us that he may sift us as wheat. Help us to be sober and vigilant, putting on the whole armor of God, that we may be able to withstand in the evil day ; and having done all, to stand ; and being more than conquerors through Him who hath loved us, may we be found of him in peace, without spot and blameless.

In the multitude of thy mercies we have been pre-

served this day. Thou hast kept us in our going out and coming in. Thou hast given us food and raiment, and hast kept this household in peace. O God, we humbly beseech thee to continue the blessings which have abounded from the providence of thine unceasing goodness. Never suffer us to be unmindful of the source of all blessings. Make us always thankful, and always obedient, receiving every mercy with gratitude, and submitting with patience to their fatherly chastening, till the days of our sojourning be ended ; and then do thou grant unto us, of thy great mercy, to partake of the inheritance of the saints in light.

Bless, O Lord, we beseech thee, all our relatives, and make them all members of the family of God. Enable us to love our enemies, to bless them that curse us, and to pray for them that despitefully use us. Destroy every uncharitable temper, that we may be known as children of our heavenly Father, and resemble thee, who makest thy sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendest rain on the just and on the unjust.

Preserve us this night from all evil, whether of body or of mind. Let no plague come nigh this dwelling. Favor us with refreshing sleep ; and if thou permittest us to awake in the morning, assist us to begin the day with thee, and our tongues shall speak of thy righteousness and praise all the day long. Hear us, we beseech thee, O Lord, through the infinite merits of Jesus Christ our Saviour.

“ The blessing of God Almighty, the Father,” etc.

Wednesday Morning.

O Thou who makest the outgoings of the morning and of the evening to rejoice, assist us, we beseech thee, to offer unto thee a morning sacrifice of praise and prayer. Thou art the preserver of our life, and the fountain of all our blessings and enjoyments. In thee we live, and move, and have our being; and from thy unmerited favor, and infinite goodness, we daily receive all that is necessary for life and godliness. Our voice shalt thou hear in the morning, O Lord; in the morning we will direct our prayer to thee, and look up. We both laid us down in peace and slept; for thou, Lord, hast made us to dwell in safety. We unfeignedly thank thee that we have not slept the sleep of death, and that no grievous calamity has befallen us. Thou hast crowned us with loving-kindness and tender mercy.

As it hath thus pleased thee, O Lord, to add the light of another morning to the days of our pilgrimage, vouchsafe, we beseech thee, to keep us this day without sin. Prepare us for every occurrence, that in all the events of this day we may see thy hand, and enjoy thy guardian care. Uphold and strengthen us, and lead us in the good and right way. Incline our heart to keep thy law; and enable us to continue in the work of faith, and labor of love, and patience of hope.

Bless, we beseech thee, all the members of this family. May thy grace and peace be our constant joy. Guide us all by thy counsel, protect us by thy power, and bring us unto glory. Assist thy servants

in the discharge of every duty. Make our eye single, that our whole body may be full of light. Draw our affections toward heavenly objects ; and in all we do assist us to be mindful of our great work on earth, and to seek the things that are above, where Christ sitteth at thy right hand ; that when he shall appear, we also may appear with him in glory. Bless all our relatives and friends ; and if we have any enemies, persecutors, or slanderers, may it please thee to forgive them, and to turn their hearts. We pray for the peace and prosperity of thy universal Church. May they that love thee, O Lord, be as the sun when he goeth forth in his strength. Bless all whom thou hast sent to be ambassadors for Christ ; that thy word, ministered by them with great fidelity, may have free course and be glorified. We commend to thy fatherly goodness all that are in adversity and trial. Help all that are afflicted to put their trust in thee ; and be thou their refuge and their strength, a very present help in time of trouble.

[*The Nations of the Earth—Persons in Authority—Teachers and Students in all Institutions of Learning.*]

Hear our prayers, O Lord God of our salvation, and of thy great mercy give us all things that are requisite and necessary, as well for the body as the soul, for time and for eternity, for the sake of Jesus Christ our Mediator and Advocate.

“Our Father which art in heaven,” etc.

Wednesday Evening.

Almighty God, our heavenly Father, graciously accept our humble and hearty thanks for all the blessings of the past day. By thy good providence we have not only been preserved from death, but such things have been bestowed upon us as thou, in thy wisdom and love, seest to be the best. We adore thee for condescending to be our guide. Thou appointest our inheritance. Thou who didst lead thy chosen people by a pillar of cloud by day, and fire by night, dost lead even us, unworthy as we are. O give us grace that we may constantly follow thee, and cheerfully submit to all the dispensations of thy providence; always remembering that thy way and thy work are perfect, and constantly placing ourselves at thy disposal. Accept also our most hearty thanks for the blessings of thy grace; for thy patience and forbearance; for thy holy word, which is a light unto our feet, and a lamp to our path: for the gift of thy well-beloved Son, and for his atonement and constant intercession; for the enlightening, comforting, and sanctifying influences of thy Holy Spirit; for the means of grace, and for the hope of glory.

What shall we render to thee for all thy benefits? We will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord. We will offer unto thee the sacrifices of thanksgiving and of praise. Thou art the Father of mercies, the God of all consolation. Thou givest us all things richly to enjoy. We have nothing but what we have received from thy bountiful goodness. O God, with all thy benefits give us the

blessing of a thankful heart. Give us a due sense of all thy mercies, that so we may bless thee every day in this life, and sing praises to thy name for ever and ever in the life to come.

We desire to live not to ourselves, but to thee ; to set thee always before us ; and whatsoever we do, to do all to thy glory. Create in us a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within us. Write thy law in our heart. Strengthen us that we may have power and victory over the world, the flesh, and the devil. Fill us with fruits of righteousness, and keep us in thy love, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.

Bless the rich and the poor ; the aged and the young ; the sick and the dying. Grant that pure and undefiled religion may prosper among us, and that our nation may be exalted by righteousness.

[*Peace—Temperance—Purity.*]

And now, most merciful God, we beseech thee to look upon us who kneel before thy mercy-seat. Thou hast supplied our wants during the day : preserve us from all danger in the night. Keep us, with our property and habitation, secure from harm. Favor us with refreshing sleep. When we awake, breathe holy and heavenly thoughts into our heart. And thus preserved until the morning, may we arise, strengthened in body and soul, to walk in that path in which it may please thee to direct us. Grant us these mercies, O Lord our heavenly Father, for the sake of Jesus Christ our Saviour.

“May the blessing of God Almighty,” etc.

Thursday Morning.

O Lord our heavenly Father, we desire this morning to approach thee with the voice of praise and thanksgiving, and to acknowledge the great goodness and mercy which hitherto thou hast manifested toward us.

We desire especially to praise thee for the blessings of the past night. We praise thee that this morning we live, and are favored with health of body and soundness of mind. We praise thee for our food, raiment, habitation, and all the comforts which we enjoy from day to day. We acknowledge thee as the Author of all our blessings. Enable us always to receive them with a thankful heart, and to render thee the glory that is due unto thy name.

We would now come to thee, O Lord, through the mediation of thy well-beloved Son. For his sake we beseech thee to receive us. For the sake of his atonement and intercession, hear our prayers, and pardon our sins. Give us the abiding testimony of thy Holy Spirit that thou art our reconciled Father, and that we are thine adopted children. O let thy good Spirit at all times dwell within us, as the Spirit of light and power, of purity and love, of consolation and joy; and may we be led by him into all the paths of truth, and holiness, and peace.

With us we beseech thee to bless all whom we should remember in worshiping at thy footstool. May all our beloved relatives be protected and saved by thee. If any of them are in affliction or trouble, give them patience, teach them resignation, and may

thy chastenings produce in them the peaceable fruits of righteousness.

Bless our country. May this nation ever be protected and favored by thee. Be gracious to our rulers. Endue our Senators with wisdom from above ; and may our Judges and Magistrates be men of uprightness, fearing God and departing from evil. May the ministers of thy word be faithful as thy messengers and servants ; and make them eminently successful in the conversion of sinners, and the edification of all that through thy grace have believed. May all classes of persons throughout the land fear, and love, and serve, and glorify thee ; and may pure and undefiled religion prevail yet more and more, till all shall know thee from the least unto the greatest.

Have mercy on all the nations of the earth. May the desolations of war cease. May ignorance and error, superstition and idolatry, be forever banished from the world ; and may all kindreds and tribes and people bow to the scepter of our Redeemer, and own him as the Lord of all.

And now, O Lord, we beseech thee to bless and keep us through the day. Help us in all our duties and engagements. Go with us wherever we go, and abide with us wherever we abide. In all our ways help us to acknowledge thee, and do thou direct our steps. Keep us, O Lord, from all sin, and in all things enable us to do thy will.

Grant us these petitions, Almighty God, for the sake of Jesus Christ our Saviour.

“Our Father which art in heaven,” etc.

Thursday Evening.

O Lord our God, once more we approach the throne of thy heavenly grace. We come to the mercy-seat by that new and living way which Christ our Saviour has consecrated for us through the vail, that is to say, his flesh; and because we have a High Priest over the house of God, we would draw near with a true heart, and in full assurance of faith, having our heart sprinkled from an evil conscience. May the Holy Spirit help our infirmities, teaching us how to pray, and bringing to our remembrance all that thy word declares concerning thee, and the worship thou requirest, that we may now pray with the Spirit, and with the understanding also. May our evening sacrifice be acceptable to thee, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

We thank thee for thy goodness and mercy to us this day, and all the days of our life. Blessed be the Lord which daily loadeth us with benefits, even the God of our salvation. Still vouchsafe unto us all things necessary for life and godliness. We rejoice before thee, O Lord, but we would rejoice with trembling. Suffer us not to be high-minded, but fill us with thy fear, that our account may be rendered with joy, and not with shame. Crown all thy gifts to us with the graces of diligence, humility, and thankfulness. Make us faithful disciples and servants of thy Son, our Lord; and preserve us from all wandering, that at last we may be presented before thee through him reconciled, and holy, and unblamable.

As we draw nearer and nearer to the last great

day, wilt thou so fill us with peace and joy in believing that we may approach thy final judgment without terror. Every day that we live makes us more and more assured of the unseen realities of the eternal state; and whensoever thou callest us, may we be found ready to depart and be with Christ. In the hour of death, whensoever that may come, enable us each to say, O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ.

We praise thee, O Father of heaven, that hast called us to this glorious fellowship. The cherubim and the seraphim, the prophets and apostles, the noble army of martyrs, the spirits of just men made perfect, all magnify thee; and we, guilty sinners, pray thee, through thy infinite love in Christ Jesus our Lord, to suffer us to join our feeble praises even now with theirs, and to unite with them in singing the new song hereafter. Therefore, with angels, and archangels, and all the company of heaven, we laud and magnify thy glorious name; evermore praising thee, and saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of hosts, heaven and earth are full of thy glory: Glory be to thee, O Lord most high.

Prepare us for all that is to come; and may all the members of our family, whether present with us or absent, be numbered with thy saints in glory everlasting, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

“The blessing of God Almighty, the Father,” etc.

Friday Morning.

O Lord our God, we fall down and worship thee with all the families of the faithful who offer up their morning sacrifice. We thank thee for thy mercy toward us during the past night, for the cheering beams of the morning, and all the blessings of the returning day. We slept in safety, for thou didst watch over us, and hast preserved us from all evil. Death has not invaded our dwelling. Disease does not hinder us from returning to our employments this day. To thee, O Lord, be all the praise. We make remembrance of thy mercy, and give glory to thy name.

And we humbly beseech thee to renew in our heart the witness of thy love, and the pledge of our adoption. Grant us a more lively apprehension of things unseen, and kindle in our heart greater fervor while following after righteousness. Constrain us to say, like thy servant of old, that our heart and flesh cry out for God, yea, for the living God. Satisfy our souls with abundant peace, and with full assurance of faith, while we meditate on thy statutes. Let not our spirit be enslaved in dependence on any created good. Be thou our life, that we may always hope in thee. And bring into our souls that peace which passeth all understanding, to keep our hearts and minds steadfast in the knowledge and love of God, and of Jesus Christ our Lord.

And we beseech thee to cause thy blessing to descend upon the work and the duties of the day. Keep us, that our feet slide not; and while we fol-

low our worldly calling, help us to give our hearts to thee, and walk before thee without reproach. Give us prudence to guide all our affairs with discretion. Give us heavenly wisdom to direct all our words. Enable us to enjoy a holy cheerfulness in the intercourse of life. Make us blameless and without rebuke, providing things honest in the sight of all men. Let the mind be in us that was in Jesus Christ our Lord, that we may show kindness, forbearance, and charity to all with whom we have to do. Teach us to speak and act as in the presence of our God; watching against the spirit of the world, and the sin that doth so easily beset us. Save us from covetousness, which is idolatry. Give us treasure in heaven, and so control our desire of earthly good that we may always live in resignation to thy will, rejoicing in the good hope of everlasting glory. Grant us wisdom to use all thy gifts as those who have to render an account.

[Labore's for the World's harvest—The Children of the household—Absent Friends.]

And while we ask thy blessing on the work of our hands, we humbly pray that it may also rest on those who are about us, and dispose them all to devote themselves in constant service unto the Lord.

Have mercy upon the whole world. Bring into thy Church the fullness of the Gentiles, and let all Israel be saved, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

“Our Father which are in heaven,” etc.

Friday Evening.

Glory be to thee, O Lord, for thy mercies through another day. We bless thee for the grace which has followed us in all the walks of life. We praise thee that our feet have not slipped, and that thou hast saved us from casting away the shield of faith.

We thank thee that thou hast prospered the work of our hands, giving us food and raiment, with supplies for every want. Help us with grateful heart to use all thy gifts for thine honor, in ceaseless oblations of prayer and praise. Day by day thou doest us good: every day assist us to offer thee thanksgiving, and in heaven may we give praise to thy name for ever and ever.

Forgive, O merciful Father, whatsoever thou hast seen wrong in our thoughts, our words, or our actions. Hide thy face from our sins, and blot out all our transgressions. When our sin is sought for, let it not be found. Let the blood of atonement purify our conscience from dead works. We come to thee through the intercession of thy Son. For his sake, pardon our iniquity, and heal our backsliding. Grant us remission of sins, and an inheritance among them that are sanctified by faith in Christ Jesus. May the joys of pardon, and the comfort of the Holy Ghost, chase away all gloom from us, remove all sadness, and enable us to rejoice in the Lord with joy unspeakable and full of glory.

We ask the same grace, O blessed Lord, for all thy Church. Send down the promised Comforter, and let the courts of Zion be crowded with worship-

ers, and let all her children be taught of the Lord. Reclaim all that are in error ; bring back all wanderers into thy fold ; and let the ministration of thy word every-where be followed by the conversion of sinners.

That our country may prosper, may pure and undefiled religion every-where prevail. Instruct all who are appointed for the ministration of justice to do thy will, and to promote thy glory. Direct all the counsels of this nation. Bless its rulers and magistrates and the people every-where.

We also pray for our relatives and friends. Teach them all to choose the good part, and let them find favor in thy sight. Sanctify to them all the events of life, instruct them in thy will, make them wise unto salvation, and save them forever.

Bless all thy servants who preach to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, and send more laborers into thy harvest. Bless all newly planted Christian Churches. Prosper missionary enterprises in all heathen lands.

[The Overthrow of Idolatry—The Diffusion of the Word of God.]

O God, who hearest prayer, hear our supplications, we beseech thee. Let the cloud of thy presence rest upon us, and be our safeguard. But as we know not what may befall us, we pray thee to renew the assurance of thy peace, and then shall we lie down rejoicing in thy love, and in hope of a resurrection to eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

“The blessing of God Almighty, the Father,” etc.

Saturday Morning.

Almighty and most glorious God, we thy creatures again present ourselves at thy footstool, offering up solemn prayer and praise, in the name and through the mediation of thy beloved Son. Cast us not away from thy presence, O Lord, but suffer us, who are but dust and ashes, once more to speak to thee. Let us now find grace in thy sight, and let our prayer ascend before thee as incense, and be joined with the prayer of Him in whom thou art always well-pleased.

We adore thee for the goodness which has watched over us through the past night, and give another day wherein to live in thy happy service.

And now, O Lord, since thou hast safely brought us to the beginning of this day, teach us how to spend it aright, that the last day of this week may be spent more fully to thy praise than any of those that have gone before. Save us from being taken up with worldly cares, lest we waste our lives in folly or in sin; and give us grace that we may live in preparation for eternity, walking circumspectly and redeeming the time, because the days are evil. O thou Judge of quick and dead, help us to remember that thy coming draweth nigh, and to live like those who are waiting for their Lord.

And that we may thus live in thy fear, send into our hearts, this morning, the healthful Spirit of thy grace. O, may he testify to our spirit that we are the children of God; may he shed abroad in our hearts the love of God the Father, reconciled to us

through Jesus Christ. May he root out and abolish every evil principle, and establish and strengthen whatever is good within us. We thank thee, who, by thy grace preventing us, dost put into our mind these good desires, and beseech thee to bring them into good effect. Make us holy in all manner of conversation, as he who hath called us is holy ; and so may the truth and example of our spotless Master work in us, and prevail with us, that as he is, even so may we be in this world. Fill us with the perfect love of God. With open face may we all behold as in a glass the glory of the Lord ; and as we behold it, may we be more and more fully changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord. O, guide us in thy truth and love, thereby to keep thy commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in thy sight.

We implore thy blessing upon all for whom we ought to pray. May all our relatives live before thee. May our families be saved with an everlasting salvation. O Lord, have mercy on them all, that none of our kindred may have their portion with unbelievers. Make them, we beseech thee, such as we pray to be made ourselves, true followers and faithful soldiers and servants of the Lord Jesus Christ.

And now, O heavenly Father, we confide all our concerns into thine hands. Bless us in our going out and coming in ; in our labor and in our substance ; in our basket and in our store. Keep our hearts in thy love, and preserve us unto life eternal, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

“Our Father which art in heaven,” etc.

Saturday Evening.

O thou who art the God of the families of all the earth, and who hast commanded us to continue in prayer, and to watch in the same with thanksgiving, hear this family, we beseech thee, which now calls upon thy name. We come to thee this night beseeching thee in mercy to receive our prayer, through the intercession of thy Son, the great Apostle and High-priest of our profession. Smile upon us, O God, for his sake.

All our ways are open to thy sight, O Lord. Thou hast searched us and known us altogether. O, be merciful to us this night: wash us thoroughly from our iniquity, and cleanse us from sin. We would not lay ourselves down to take rest while under thy displeasure and frown. O Lamb of God, who takest away the sin of the world, grant us and those for whom we should pray thy peace. Cleanse thy servants from secret faults. Pardon all our omissions, offenses, and backslidings; and if we have openly disobeyed thee, in word, or in temper, or in deed, pardon the iniquity of thy servants.

Blessed be thy name, O God, for the many mercies of this day, and of the week which is now passed away. Thou hast granted us life and favor, and preserved our mind in peace. Thou hast given us all things necessary for life and godliness. Thou hast satisfied our mouth with good things, and crowned us with loving-kindness and tender mercies. Thou hast made us to rejoice in thy watchful care by night, and in thy preserving power by day. And

still thou waitest to be gracious. Glory be to thee, O Lord most High. Who is a God like unto thee, or who can worthily celebrate thy praise? Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, for ever and ever.

Be pleased, O heavenly Father, to take us again under thy sure protection. While we sleep, preserve us from all evil. Spread thy wings over this habitation; and may we abide under the shadow of the Almighty.

Prepare us for the approaching Lord's day. Cleanse us now from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, that so we may be fitted in thine own day to converse with thee. If we be spared until the morrow, help us to hallow it according to thy will, and let us enjoy the foretaste of an unbroken and eternal Sabbath before thy throne.

O Lord Jesus, arise and plead thine own cause. The heathen are thine inheritance. Hasten to reign over them. Come, we beseech thee; O come quickly! Maintain thy right, and claim the world as ransomed for thine own. Make thy servants jealous for thine honor; fill them with pity for the perishing world. Send forth laborers into the harvest. Bless and preserve all that are engaged in the work of thy ministry, both at home and abroad, and send down a gracious rain upon thine inheritance.

"The blessing of God Almighty, the Father," etc.

FOURTH WEEK.

Sunday Morning.

O heavenly Father, who hast in thy gracious providence kept us in safety through the watches of the night, accept our sacrifice of prayer and thanksgiving.

We pray, holy Father, that thy protecting goodness may be around us this day. Be with us in whatever we may think or do. Wherever we go, do thou go ; wherever we abide, do thou abide. Ever be with us, to guide, to help, and to bless us. .

And may we remember that this is thy day, and keep it holy unto thee. Banish all worldly cares, all wandering thoughts. Fix our hearts upon things above. And when we go up to thy house of prayer, may we worship thee in spirit and in truth.

Bless, O heavenly Father, especially thy minister whom thou hast set over us. Grant that the influences of the Holy Spirit may be abundantly poured out upon him this day ! May he hold up the cross in all simplicity, plainness, and affection. May thy word fall as into good ground, and bring forth fruit—some thirty, some sixty, and some a hundredfold.

Lord Jesus, be in the midst of all assemblies of thy people to-day. Let thy word have free course and be glorified. May sinners be saved ; the unconverted changed ; the dead in trespasses and sins quickened ; the sleeper aroused ; the mourning penitents comforted ; the broken in heart healed ; the waverers decided ; the backsliders humbled ; and the

righteous built up in their most holy faith. Bless the word of thy grace to them all.

[*Sunday-Schools—Tract Distribution—Hospitals—
Asylums and their Inmates.*]

And bless, O Lord, all near and dear to us. Bless our parents, friends, and relatives. Bless the poor, the destitute, the dying, the outcast, the afflicted, and him that hath no helper.

And now, O Lord God, we again ask for ourselves. May we love one another as thou hast given us commandment. Help us to bear with each other's failings or infirmities. Increase in us a spirit of kindness, so that we may love in deed as in word. May we ever feel for those who possess not the many mercies of our own lot. If our brother hath need, may we never shut up the bowels of compassion from him. O Lord, since thy Son died for us guilty sinners, may we ever be ready to deny ourselves for the sake of those in necessity around us. Fill our souls with love, both to thee and to our fellow-creatures. Subdue in us all hatred, all ill-will; root out of our hearts all bitterness. Enable us to be kind one to another, to be forgiving if we have any cause of offense, and ever to remember him who graciously forgave us.

These, and all other mercies, we ask, holy Father, in the name and through the mediation of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

"Our Father who art in heaven," etc.

Sunday Evening.

Once more, O God, in the multitude of thy tender mercies, we are permitted to draw near to thy throne of grace. We have had many religious privileges to-day, but we fear we have not used them as we ought to have done. Forgive the sins of our worship; wash our very services in the blood of the Lamb, and keep us at all times from honoring thee with our lips, while our hearts are far from thee.

Bless, to our hearts, O God, the word of the truth of the Gospel which our ears have heard to-day. Bless the portions of thy holy book to which we have listened, and O, fasten upon our souls the solemn words of the Saviour which we have just read. Keep us from the defilement that cometh out of the heart. From all deadly sin, from envy, hatred, malice, and all uncharitableness, good Lord, deliver us.

Heavenly Father, and Saviour, and Comforter, it grieves us to think that our hearts are so dead, and our lips are so dumb, to speak thy praise. Yet we beseech thee accept our humble tribute of thanksgiving, for Jesus' sake, and fit us for singing thy praises in a better way and in a brighter world.

We rejoice to think of thee, eternal King, as the God who heareth and answereth prayer. May all the prayers to-day offered, according to thy will, return in blessings to many, many souls. Make thy word preached this day the power of God unto the salvation of many who have heard it. Let thy Church now arise, shake herself from the dust, and put on

her beautiful garments ; and let all the ends of the world see the salvation of our God.

Bless the poor in their distress ; bless the sick upon their beds ; bless the captives in their dungeon, especially those whom Satan hath bound ; and, in blessing others, forget us not. Lord, we would see Jesus. Take the vail from our hearts, and let us behold the King in his beauty. Forgive us that we have grieved the blessed Comforter, and take not the Holy Spirit from us. We desire to know more of thee and thy love, which passeth knowledge, and to have a deeper experience of the work of thy grace in our hearts.

For all the duties, trials, and privileges of the week upon which we have now entered may we be quickened and strengthened by the Holy Spirit, that we may do thy perfect will, and in all circumstances adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour. May we be diligent in business, and fervent in spirit, serving the Lord each successive day.

Gathered here as a family, we ask for family mercies. [Our children, ourselves, the dear ones at home, and the dear ones far away, bless them all, O Lord.] Make those who are already thine more like thee, and O, that all whom we love may live before thee ! And now for the hours of our nightly rest we cast ourselves on thy loving care. Guard us while we sleep, and when we awake may we be still with thee. We ask all for the love of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

“The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,” etc.

Monday Morning.

We would begin this day, O Lord, heavenly Father, with the sacrifices of praise and thanksgiving. All thy works are done in truth, and the earth is full of thy goodness. Grant, we beseech thee, to each of us such a knowledge of the greatest of all thy blessings, the blessings of the Gospel of Christ, that our hearts may ever be tuned to thy praise. We adore thee for the finished work of our redemption in Christ Jesus. O, how great is thy loving-kindness to the sons of men! Thou pardonest sin, and openest the kingdom of heaven to all believers. Lord, may we by thy grace be enabled to believe in thy dear Son with all our hearts. Convince each of us more deeply of our lost and ruined condition by nature, and enable us by faith to cast our sins on Jesus. May the blessedness of those whose God is the Lord be ours, that our mouth may be filled with laughter and our tongue with joy; and that we may walk worthy of our high calling as thy children in Christ Jesus, fill our hearts, we pray thee, with a holy fear of thy great name. Impress upon us the solemn truth that thine eye is in every place, beholding the evil and the good, and by the power of thy Spirit help us to walk before thee in holiness and true righteousness.

Keep us mindful, O Lord, of our weakness and frailty. May we never so presume on our own strength as to run into temptation, or fall from our dependence on thy grace. Give us an increasing love for thy holy word. May we make it a light for

our feet and a lamp for our path. May we esteem it more than our necessary food, and may thy testimonies be the very joy of our hearts. Be with us this day in our several employments. Help us to engage in every duty in dependence on thy grace, and with a humble desire, whether we eat or drink, or whatsoever we do, to do all to thy glory. Thou hast promised, O Lord, to preserve the souls of thy people who wait on thee. Fulfill to us, we beseech thee, that promise. Be thou our help and shield, a very present help in every time of trouble. Sanctify to us our crosses as well as our comforts; and grant that, being kept steadfast in thy faith and fear, we may so pass through the waves of this troublesome world as finally to come to the land of everlasting life.

[*Prisoners—Criminals—Inebriates—The Tempted—
The Penitent.*]

Bless, we pray thee, the efforts of thy servants to proclaim thy truth among all nations. Hasten the time when all men shall have heard the Gospel of thy salvation, and when all the inhabitants of the world shall stand in awe of thee. Bring in thy kingdom of righteousness and peace. Hear these our prayers, O Lord, and accept the praises and thanksgivings which we offer unto thee, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

“Our Father which art in heaven,” etc.

Monday Evening.

Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, the Creator of angels and of men, just, O Lord, are all thy ways. We pray thee to lay the restraint of thy great might upon the powers of darkness. Grant unto us a daily victory over all their temptations and over the corruptions of our own hearts, through Him who has redeemed us with his precious blood.

Animate us with the same spirit that filled the holy martyrs, who in former days witnessed for Jesus and for the word of God. May we be valiant for the truth, displaying its inward power by a life according to godliness, and confessing it openly in our daily conduct. In thine infinite mercy forgive us those things wherein we have failed in faithfulness to thee and thy word. May the blood of Jesus Christ thy Son cleanse us from all sin. May we be found in him at his coming.

Day by day we draw nearer to that great white throne from which shall be made the final manifestation of thy holiness, authority and justice. Suffer us not to forget that we must all stand at thy judgment-seat to give account of the things done in the body. Blot out all our sins from thy book of remembrance, and grant that our names may be found written in the book of life.

We implore thee to bless our [children,] relations, and friends, with thy salvation, that when Christ shall come in the glory of the Father we may be re-united with them in that world of everlasting life and glory which shall then be opened

to thy redeemed, and where there shall be no more death.

Thou hast shown us that earth and heaven shall flee away before the throne of the Judge, and that our present state is but temporary and corruptible. Suffer us not to bind our hearts to those things which must soon be no more. May our affections be fixed on those objects which are beyond the reach of change, and on Him who shall then come in his glory, that when he shall appear we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming. May each hour of life as it passes by leave us better and better prepared for our great and final account. May we be enabled to redeem the time, knowing that the days are evil, and may we diligently accomplish whatever work thou hast given us to do.

Hasten, O Lord, the fulfillment of thy purposes. May the long conflict between good and evil be speedily decided. Crown thine own cause with victory. Let superstition and all delusion and unrighteousness pass away and cease forever, and let thy kingdom come in all the earth.

We commit ourselves to thy grace, in His name for the day of whose coming we would look with holy fear and joy. The Lord grant unto us that we may find mercy of the Lord at that day. Accept us now and at the last, for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.

"The grace of our Lord," etc.

Tuesday Morning.

Heavenly Father, spared by thy mercy in Christ Jesus, we meet together again this morning in peace and with thankfulness, to hear thy holy word, to tell thee all our wants, and to ask for grace and strength to walk according to thy will. Make us, we beseech thee, very attentive to thy voice speaking to us. Write thy word on our hearts by the power of God the Holy Spirit.

We would begin the day with thee ; for blessed is that family that knows the joyful sound of thy voice ; they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance.

We humbly confess unto thee, heavenly Father, that we are sinful, and have of ourselves no desire for that which is holy and pleasing unto thee ; we are weak, and have no power to do what is good. O, leave us not to ourselves, but enable us to think and to do always that which is righteous in thy sight.

We would remember that as long as we seek thee, thou wilt make us to prosper ; thou wilt help us against the enemies of our soul, the world without, and our deceitful hearts within ; thou wilt marvelously help us, and we shall be strong. While we thank thee for this assured hope of spiritual strength, we pray thee to make and to keep us humble, lest our heart be lifted up to our destruction. We would remember the solemn word of warning, "Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall." Hold thou up our goings, O Lord, in thy ways, that our footsteps slip not.

Make us each to know and to do our duty in that station of life in which thou hast placed us, with diligence and faithfulness, and to abide therein with contentment; let there be in us no feeling of discontent with what thy goodness gives us, or thy loving care denies.

Keep us, heavenly Father, from the power of evil example, and unholy agreement with any thing that is sinful. Give us grace, not only to avoid all evil, but all appearance of evil, that we may glorify thee in all that we do. We desire to watch and pray continually, lest we fall into temptation, and wander in heart and life from thee. May thy blessed Spirit guide us into all truth, and show us clearly all our duties one to another, and to our fellow-men.

O Lord, we have nothing to boast of in ourselves; but we have much to be ashamed of, to repent of, and to forsake. We know that the wages of sin is death, but thy free gift is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord; his blood cleanseth from all sin; his righteousness is unto and upon all those who believe. We make glad mention of all this before thee, O our God and Father, as the only ground of our hope in the great day of his appearing.

And now we commit to thy loving care ourselves, and all who are dear to us. Bless and accept us for Jesus Christ's sake, our only Mediator and Redeemer. Amen.

“Our Father which art in heaven,” etc.

Tuesday Evening.

O God, the King of heaven, supreme, unchangeable, and holy, look down with pity upon us, the creatures of thine almighty hand. Consider the sinful character of the world in which we live, the way in which our souls are deluded by sin, and the calamities under which our bodies suffer. Look upon us from thy dwelling-place on high.

Blessed forever be thy name that we may look forward to a better state than this. We thank thee, too, for the glimpses of the coming glories, which break upon us in thy last revelation of things to come. We are lost in its wonders, but our minds are exalted in the thought of them. We rise above the world and its narrow confines. We praise thee that Jesus has his place in the vision of the heavenly city; that thy dear Son, our Redeemer, fills it with the luster of his light. We rejoice to know that in that heavenly state he whom we love is one with thee, whom we adore.

We thank thee for the gift of a Saviour to mortal man, to reveal unto us thy glory and all the exceeding tenderness of thy great compassion. We hope to bless and praise thee to all eternity for what we have seen in him, what we have learned by him, and what he has been to us. We should not have known thee but by him. We could not have loved thee, we could not have come to thee, had we not received aid from on high. The glories of thy infinite holiness would have made us recoil in alarm; but thou didst send him to bear the penalty of our sins,

and to reconcile us unto thyself by the sacrifice of his cross.

By the teaching of thy Spirit enable us to understand the happy destiny in store for us, and the dignity to which we shall be raised as sons of God and joint-heirs with Jesus. We shall drink of the water of life. We shall bathe in unsullied light. We shall bask in the light of thy countenance, in that city where nothing that defileth can enter, and no temptation shall approach us, nor the fear of sin distract our peace. Amid the sounds of heavenly harmonies, the sights of all beauty and glory, the apprehension of all knowledge, the attainment of all grace, what bliss will be ours! Endless ages will bring us nearer to thee continually; and yet thy fullness will ever pass knowledge. O glorious God, our Father; O most gracious, most tender Son, our Saviour; most mighty Spirit, our Sanctifier, all praise from multitudes of the human race be ever thine! Let the angels echo man's rejoicing song; let all creatures magnify thee; let the whole universe celebrate thy glory, and let all mankind come to the knowledge of thy truth.

[*Pagan Nations—India, China, Japan, etc.—Jews—Mohammedans.*]

And, O, grant that, with thy redeemed and sanctified people, we and all who are dear to us may be found at the last without fault, because cleansed in Christ's blood, and made holy by thy indwelling Spirit. Hear and help us, for Christ's sake. Amen.

Wednesday Morning.

Most merciful Father, we, thy weak and dependent children, desire to approach unto thee in prayer and worship. Let our prayer come before thee as incense, and the lifting up of our hands as the morning sacrifice of old.

We give thanks at the remembrance of thy holiness and love, which are revealed in thy well-beloved Son, our Saviour. Enrich us, we beseech thee, in him with all heavenly blessings. We give thanks and rejoice that we live in a land where the true light shineth. We rejoice that while to others there are lords many, and gods many, to us there is but one God the Father, of whom are all things, and we of him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him.

Let our hearts rise in thankfulness unto thee on the morning of this new day, for the new mercies by which we are surrounded. We acknowledge, O Lord, thy gracious care over us through the silence and darkness of another night. We pray for a blessing to rest on that portion of holy Scripture which we have read. We desire to thank thee for the great national privileges which we enjoy. We pray that the shield of thy protection may evermore surround our country; that thou wouldest preserve us from internal discord and from foreign wars, and cause that righteousness to abound among us which is the strength and glory of any nation.

We pray, as we are taught, for all that are in

authority over us ; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life, in all godliness and honesty, for this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour. Bless the chief magistrate of our nation, and all our rulers and judges. Give all needful wisdom to those who guide the affairs of this great country. May the spirit of peace, and a high sense of right, distinguish our legislators, and grant them thy special guidance in all times of perplexity and trial.

Pity thou, O God, the enslaved and oppressed every-where, and set them free. Let tyranny and oppression cease, and may rulers be raised up who shall be the true shepherds of their people.

[The cessation of Wars to the ends of the earth—The universal reign of Peace—The overthrow of Idolatry—The establishment of the Church.]

And now, our heavenly Father, we commend ourselves to thee, and the word of thy grace. We are weak, but our strength is in thee. We are ignorant, but thy Spirit can teach and guide us. Keep us in thy fear and love this day, and help us to live as thy children and to adorn the doctrine of thy Gospel in all things. May thy peace rest on our house, and thy blessing prosper us in our daily work. Mercifully accept us and our prayers through thy Son, our blessed Lord and Saviour. Amen.

“Our Father which art in heaven,” etc.

Wednesday Evening.

O God, thou hast laid in Zion a chief corner-stone, elect and precious, and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded. May we, as we come to the family altar this evening, be a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, offering up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to thee by Jesus Christ.

We thank thee for the mercies and blessings that have encompassed our path during the day. Thou hast not suffered us to want any good thing. O Lord, we will praise thee; for thou makest the outgoings of the morning and evening to rejoice.

We pray thee to forgive whatsoever sin we have committed to-day. We are conscious of many errors, infirmities, and backslidings. We have been as sheep going astray; but we would return to the Bishop and Shepherd of our souls. The Lord Jesus bore our sins in his own body on the tree; may we receive healing by his stripes, and dying unto sin, live unto righteousness.

Help us, we beseech thee, to show forth the praises of Him who hath called us out of darkness into his marvelous light. May we abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul. May we be careful to maintain good works. In any wrong which we may at any time suffer, may we continue in well-doing, and commit ourselves to him who judgeth righteously, following the example of Christ who suffered for us, and who has left us an example that we should follow in his steps. We thank thee for the example of Christ. May we imbibe his Spirit, have the same

mind dwelling in us that dwelleth also in him, and be in the world even as he was. May we grow up into his likeness, and beholding in his human life the divine pattern of what manner of persons we ought to be in all holy conversation and godliness, may we be changed into his image from glory to glory, as by the Spirit of the Lord. Thus may we be qualified to live and labor for the salvation of our fellow-men, and the establishment of thy kingdom upon the earth.

[The quickening of Believers—The enlightenment of the Ignorant—The suppression of Intemperance—The reform of the Vicious.]

We now commend ourselves to thy care for the night. May the angels of the Lord encamp around our dwelling, and may we rest in peace beneath thy sheltering wing.

Command thy blessing upon thy universal Church. Enlarge the borders of thy kingdom. Let those who have not obtained mercy, now obtain mercy. Let those who are not thy people soon become thy people. Bring in the Jew with the fullness of the Gentiles. Give to thy Son the heathen for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession. And let thy name be hallowed, and thy will be done on earth, even as it is in heaven. Mercifully hear us; graciously answer us, and do exceeding abundantly for us above all that we ask or think, through Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour. Amen.

Thursday Morning.

O Lord our God, and our fathers' God, our voice shalt thou hear in the morning, for thine ear is ever attent to the cry of those who call upon thee. The heaven of heavens cannot contain thee, but thou hast promised to dwell with him that is of a contrite heart and who trembleth at thy word. Behold us met in the name of thy dear Son, Jesus Christ, and look with favor upon us, as thine adopted children.

We praise thee for that fatherly love which promises to supply our wants and satisfy our desires out of the fullness of thy blessing ; and we thank thee for thine assurance so free and full, that every one who asketh receiveth, and he that seeketh findeth, and to him that knocketh the door is opened. It is in confidence that thou art still the same, still faithful to thy word, that we come to thee at this time for pardon and peace, and grace to help us in our time of need.

We know not what we should pray for as we ought ; we do not appreciate as we ought our own real wants, nor the value of things which we should ask for. We therefore seek thy guiding Spirit to teach us now and at all times how to pray. May He bring our will into conformity to thy will ; may he set our desires upon those things which thou approvest and wilt be willing to grant.

We ask, as did thy servant Solomon, for a wise and understanding heart, that we may do our duty in that position in life in which thou hast been pleased

to place us. We know not what is best for us ; we would not fix our lot, nor appoint our station in life ; but we ask for thy special grace, so to conduct and aid us, that we may fulfill the object of our being, and set forth thy glory.

We always need wisdom, and too often do we lean to our own understanding ; we ask for that knowledge which will enable us to guide our affairs with discretion, and to avoid the manifold evils to which we are exposed.

At all times of perplexity and doubt show us our path, and keep us in the right way ; and if we have strayed, bring us back to the Shepherd and Bishop of our souls.

O God of holiness, make us holy in all manner of conversation, and teach us to follow the instructions of our blessed Saviour. May we be transformed into his likeness, that men may take knowledge of us that we have been with Jesus, and glorify him in us, his humble followers,

[Our Children—Our Friends—Our Neighbors—The Poor—The Sick—The Tempted.]

We thank thee for having placed all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge in Jesus Christ, with whom thou wilt freely give us all things. Unworthy of the least of thy mercies, we entreat thee to continue them to us this day and ever, for the sake of our blessed Saviour, who has taught us to pray, saying :

“Our Father which art in heaven,” etc.

Thursday Evening.

O Lord Jesus Christ, blessed art thou, O thou King of glory. We rejoice in thy mercy, and especially in the glorious fact that thou, our risen Saviour, art Head of thine elect Church, which thou hast knit together in one holy communion and fellowship.

Enable us to hold fast the confidence and rejoicing of our hope in thee unto the end. Remember us in our low estate, now that thou art in thy kingdom. Save us from hardness of heart, and contempt of thy word and every form of unbelief.

From the deceitfulness of sin and every root of bitterness, good Lord, deliver us. Help us, O God, and daily strengthen our hearts to be steadfast unto the end, that when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, we also may appear with him in glory. O come down, thou Spirit of God, and make clean our hearts within us. Establish and increase in us whatsoever of faith and love thou hast wrought in us. Heal our distempers, help our infirmities, succor our weaknesses, and in thy great goodness supply all our wants through the riches of thy love.

Blessed be thy name, O God, for the promise of eternal rest and peace. Through the grace and merits of thy dear Son, we pray thee that we may not come short of it although we have been unfaithful. Make us watchful against all that might hinder us in the heavenly race, and as thou knowest how many temptations beset us, we pray that thou

wouldest defend and keep us in the midst of all dangers. Keep our hearts tender, and so make known to us the preciousness of thy love in Christ, and the faithfulness of thy promises, that we may follow the Lord fully, and not turn back from thee to our own ways.

Spread around us to-night the shield of thy care. Give rest and peace to us and to all whom we should remember at thy throne of grace. Compassionate the sick, the sorrowful, and the dying. Extend the borders of thy Church in every land, and hasten the time when Christ's name shall be a theme of praise on every tongue, and every knee shall bow at his footstool. Let thy spirit guide the counsels of our rulers and all in authority. Make them good men and godly, that they may fear thee, love thy Sabbaths, and honor thy name.

*[The call of laborers for the vineyard of the Lord—
Divine aid for ministers, missionaries, tract distributors, and Sunday-school teachers.]*

And now, O God, we beseech thee mercifully to incline thine ears to us that have made our prayers and supplications to thee. Grant that those things which we have asked according to thy will may be bestowed according to thine infinite wisdom for our greatest good for the relief of human necessity, and for the setting forth of thy glory, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Friday Morning.

Glory be to thee, O God, because thou hast protected us during the past night, and given us rest and sleep. As thou hast renewed unto us the morning light, we pray thee to renew our minds by thy Holy Spirit.

Follow with thy blessing, we pray thee, the reading of thy word. Grant that we may be nourished and grow thereby. Cause us to take increasing delight in thy law, and to meditate in it day and night. Cause its sacred impressions to abide with us during the day, influencing our life, so that we may not be merely hearers but doers of thy word.

Fill our hearts, O Lord, with Christian love. Make us kind and gentle, and courteous and meek toward all men; and grant that we may adorn the Gospel by the sweetness of our tempers, and the amiability of our lives. Deliver us from all hardness of heart, and harshness, and suspicion, and uncharitableness, lest we should repel others from the religion which we profess.

Grant us likewise, O God, the gift of holiness. Help us to bear in mind that without holiness no man shall see the Lord. May we be ready to suffer for righteousness' sake, and count it an honor and a joy. Prevent us from ever sanctioning, or encouraging, or pleading for what is wrong or doubtful. May we never be partakers of the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them. And while we are striving to counteract the evil around us, and to influence others for good, grant that we may not

ourselves be lukewarm or worldly, but that we may have the daily anointing of the Holy Ghost, and continually live in a spiritual and heavenly frame of mind. When thou pourest out thy blessings upon thy people, forget not us, O Lord ; grant that we may not be dry while there is dew on all around.

May thy work be graciously revived in our individual hearts, and may glorious revivals visit all thy Churches, and extend their happy influences to the ends of the earth. May all things that hinder the progress of truth be removed, and may the knowledge of the true God and of the Lord Jesus Christ be extended to all who now sit in the darkness of moral death.

Save us, blessed Lord, from self-deceit and from wrong views of thy character. Impress upon our minds that thou, O God, seest us, and that there is not a word on our lips, nor a thought in our hearts, but thou, O God, knowest it altogether. Make us sensible of thy mercies to us. Teach us the value of our gifts, and privileges, and advantages.

We humbly beseech thee, let thy blessing accompany us during the day that is before us. O Lord, let us not forget thee, and hide not thou thy face from us. Help us to keep a conscience void of offense toward thee, and toward all men. Enable us to walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time ; so that when we come together again to offer our evening sacrifice, our hearts may not reproach us with any willful sins. Hear us, O God, in these our prayers, for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Friday Evening.

At the close of the day, we would again seek thy favor, O Lord God. May the passages of thy word, to which we have just listened, be received by us into good and honest hearts.

Help each one of us to examine ourselves, whether we are in the faith. Let not our profession be only a bending of the knee, while our heart is not humbled. Let not our prayer come only from the lip, while our heart is far away from thee. Heavenly Father, forgive all our lukewarmness. Give us a heart to pray more—to ask oftener for the gift of thy Holy Spirit. May we manifest a deeper interest in dying to sin and living unto thee, so that by our lives we may show that we are under the power of the Holy Ghost.

We commenced this day with reading thy word, and asking help that we might live up to the privileges promised in that word. At evening we have to grieve over many shortcomings and weaknesses. While the spirit is willing, O how weak we often find the flesh to be! We would not hide one sin; help us, O God, by thy Spirit, to confess every sin. As thou dost deepen the sense of sin within us, so let thy word mightily grow in our minds, and be enjoyed in our lives, through the forgiveness which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

When we testify to others about the happiness of true godliness, O, may we do it with our lives as well as by our words! Keep us from the influence of false doctrine, and make those who preach thy word

themselves examples of thy saving power and heavenly grace.

We pray for every member of our family. May thy grace be adapted to all our individual wants and trials. We pray for our friends and neighbors ; may thy word grow mightily among them also. We pray for our enemies, O Lord God ; may thy love be shed abroad in their hearts.

Help each of us to take away the stumbling-block out of our brother's way. Remove whatever tends to stop the spread of divine truth in the world. Bless, O Lord, all Sabbath-schools, all faithful preachers of the word, all missionary and other agencies, which seek to place the sinner under the power of the Gospel. May all thy faithful children co-operate to suppress those vices and iniquities which prevent the word of God having free course and being glorified among men. May Christian labor soon triumph over Sabbath-breaking, infidelity, licentiousness, and all moral evils, and may thy Church prosper in all its holy activities.

As we pray for success on these undertakings, so lead each one of us to do our part in helping on thy blessed work. As we can each be useful in our day and generation, may we so live that none shall hereafter charge us with not helping them to receive the Gospel.

We commend each other to thy kind care for the night. Graciously watch over us, and defend us from all evil. Hear us, and have mercy upon us, for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.

Saturday Morning.

O Lord God, we would turn our earliest thoughts to thee. In thy providence thou hast spared us during the hours of the past night, thou hast kept watch beside our beds, thou hast renewed our strength, and hast awakened us to find all our family circle blessed by thee. We kneel now before thee, and utter forth our united thanksgiving. O Lord God, we need thy help and protection throughout this day. We cannot go right, we cannot do right, we cannot even think right, without thee. Be with us, then, O God, in all we think and do. Be with us in our goings out and in our comings in; and help us so to act that when we come to lie down at night our conscience may be free from sins against thy divine law.

We feel, Lord, our own utter weakness. We know that unless we have the constant indwelling of thy Spirit we cannot please thee. There is much pride remaining within our breasts, much irritability of disposition, much impatience if trial comes upon us, much readiness of judging others, so that we are prone of ourselves to go astray. O Lord God, our faith is so weak, our love so lukewarm, our interest in divine things so little, that unless thy Spirit strengthen, and enkindle, and keep alive our faith and love, we cannot but err and stray.

Keep us, then, O Lord God, keep our hearts aright; keep our very thoughts; keep our unruly tongue; keep us in all things; and grant that this day we may breathe the spirit of Jesus, and follow, in all our dealings with our fellow-men, the footsteps of

our divine Master. We would live to thy honor and glory.

If tempted, may we, by thy power, resist and overcome; but if it be thy will, lead us not into temptation. Give success to the work of our hands. May we be blessed in our business and pursuits. Thou knowest the needs of each and all, grant us help and blessing in accordance with these needs. Apportion strength according to our necessities. Bless our children; may they learn early to love and to serve thee. May they be thy children. May their young hearts be touched by thy truth, and may they give themselves up to the Lord. Bless those that govern among us. May we all remember that we have a Master in heaven. Bless us all with the spirit of love, of truth, and of a sound mind.

[The Nations of the Earth—The Missionaries of the Cross—The converted Heathen—Sunday-Schools—Colleges and Institutions of Learning.]

And now we commit all those for whom we ought to pray to thy blessing and keeping. Bless them according to their several necessities; give them in this world knowledge of thy truth, and in the world to come life everlasting.

These and all other mercies we ask in the name and for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

“Our Father who art in heaven,” etc.

Saturday Evening.

Gracious and merciful God, our heavenly Father, in whom we live, and move, and have our being, brought by thy parental care to the close of another day, we would again draw near to thy throne of grace, and ere we retire to rest offer to thee our evening sacrifice of prayer and praise.

We thank thee for the mercies of this day, for our temporal supplies, for food and raiment, and all the comforts we have been permitted to enjoy. May we never forget from whom all blessings come; but tracing up every mercy to thee, the fountain of all good, may our souls, and all that is within us, praise and bless thy holy name.

Above all, we would thank thee for thine unspeakable love in our redemption by thy dear Son. For his sake pardon whatever thou hast seen of evil in us this day, and blot out all our sins by his atoning blood, that being justified by faith in him, we may have peace with thee, our God, and rejoice in the hope of thy glory.

And do thou, who art the giver of all grace, and who hast, we humbly trust, made known to us thy truth, and called us to thy eternal kingdom, perfect thy work within us. Daily more and more strengthen us in our souls. Especially, we beseech thee, by thy Spirit, to make us humble. Root out of our hearts all pride and self-conceit. Give us the very mind that was in Christ, that we may submit ourselves in all things to thy will, and by our meekness and humility adorn the Gospel of thy dear Son.

Deliver us from all error in doctrine, and from all evil in practice. Confirm and settle us in the true faith of the Gospel, that we may not be carried about by divers and strange doctrines; but keeping steadfast hold of thee and thy word to the end of our lives, may finally, when the chief Shepherd shall appear, receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.

[Absent Friends—Ministers of the Gospel—Christian Missions, etc.]

To thy love and mercy we commit ourselves for the night, casting all our care upon thee, in the assured belief that thou carest for us. Do thou who never slumberest nor sleepest, with whom the darkness and the light are both alike, watch over us for good. With humble and thankful hearts we would retire to rest, and lie down under the shadow of thy wings. Grant us refreshing sleep, that we may be fitted to fulfill whatever duties and meet whatever trials thou, in thy wisdom, mayest appoint for us. Specially prepare us for all the duties and privileges of the holy Sabbath now at hand, and also for the eternal Sabbath to which we look forward.

May the Lord bless, preserve, and keep us; may he mercifully cause his face to shine upon us.

We ask all, O God, in thy dear Son's name, to whom, with thee and the Holy Spirit, we would ascribe all glory and honor, majesty and dominion, for ever and ever. Amen.

PRAYERS FOR PARTICULAR OCCASIONS.

NEW-YEAR'S DAY.

Morning Prayer.

Almighty and ever-blessed God, Fountain of all being, and Father of all mercies, our Maker and Preserver, we render thee unfeigned thanksgivings for having brought us to the beginning of another year. We remember the way by which thou hast led us in the past, and acknowledge that thou alone, O God, hast helped us unto this day. Through the conflicts and temptations of years gone by we have been brought by thy providence and grace. We praise thee that our wants have been supplied, and our life prolonged. Glory be to thy name that we have had food and raiment, and that the year has indeed been crowned with thy goodness. But above all, we adore thee for the riches of thy love, in spiritual blessings which have been vouchsafed unto us. Blessed be thou, O God, for the Christian Sabbath, for the ministry of thy word, and all our enjoyments in the house of prayer. From time to time thou hast permitted us to worship thee in the great congregation ; and there, as well as in secret, and at the domestic altar, we have been allowed to wait upon thee, that our strength might be renewed. O God, we bless thee that

with all these outward advantages we have likewise enjoyed the influences of the Holy Spirit, refreshing our souls, restraining us from evil, and inclining us to good. We have been cheered in suffering, directed and strengthened in duty, and disposed, by thy grace, to work out our own salvation with fear and trembling.

Thou permittest us to see the beginning of another year ; we desire to begin it with thee, and to spend every hour of it according to thy holy will. Help us to learn wisdom from all that is past. Against all that has been a hinderance to us, or an occasion of stumbling, enable us henceforth to watch. May we avoid every thing by which in past time we have offended thee, and brought condemnation on our soul. Rekindle thy love within us, that we may be fervent in spirit, always giving diligence to make our calling and election sure, and fully prepare us for the performance of all thy will.

And now, heavenly Father, we cast all our care upon thee, and leave ourselves in thy hands. Lead us in the good and the right way ; and may we so pass through all events, and so experience the baptism of the Holy Spirit, as daily to grow in holiness, and be fruitful in every good word and work. Thou, Lord, shalt choose our inheritance for us : only be thou the joy of our soul, and all shall be well, whether we live, or whether we die.

O God, we pray that this may be indeed a year of deliverance to many who are now the captives of sin and Satan.

“Our Father which art in heaven,” etc.

Evening Prayer.

O Lord, our heavenly Father, from everlasting to everlasting thou art God. A thousand years in thy sight are but as yesterday when it is passed, and as a watch in the night. But man is vanity ; his days are as a shadow ; as a flower of the field so he flourisheth. And yet, O Lord God, thou hast kept our souls in life ; and because thy compassions fail not, we are all here waiting upon thee on this first evening of another year. O, give us grace to glorify thee. Fill our hearts with thankfulness, and our mouths and our lives with praise. May we never be weary of giving thee thanks, for thou art good, and doest good, and thy tender mercies are over all thy works. Bless the Lord, O our soul, and all that is within us bless his holy name, who forgiveth all our iniquities, who healeth all our diseases, who redeemeth our life from destruction, and crowneth us with loving-kindness and tender mercies.

And now, O Lord our Saviour, be nigh unto us who call upon thee, and fulfill all our desire. We wait upon thee, and upon thee only do we depend for all temporal good and spiritual blessing. Do thou graciously open thy hand day by day, and satisfy us while we sojourn here with those things that thou knowest we need. Uphold us, that we fall not. If bowed down under trial or sorrow, lift us up. Increase in us true religion, and nourish us with all goodness. Under the teaching of the Holy Ghost, may we grow daily in the knowledge of thyself and of Jesus Christ thy Son. May we enjoy continually

a peaceful sense of pardoning mercy through his atoning blood and righteousness. May he be unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption; and may the life we live in the flesh be by the faith of him who loved us and gave himself for us.

We are entering on a new year, through thy mercy. Strengthen us, we pray thee, for the duties and trials that may be before us. So order and dispose the events that shall befall us that they may conduce to our advancement in true religion and goodness. Help us to keep ever present in our minds the solemn truth that the time is short. Bless each member of this family. May none of us neglect the great salvation. May we abound in love one toward another, and endeavor to help each other in our Christian course.

[Family blessings, admonitions, trials, and deliverances enumerated.]

Have mercy, we pray thee, on the sick and destitute around us. Look also in compassion on the many thousands of our fellow-beings who are walking in the ways of sin, and give them grace to repent and turn to thee. Let this year see a great increase in thy Church.

Hear us, O Lord, for thy mercy is great, and do for us exceeding abundantly above all that we can ask or think, for the sake of thy son, our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

EASTER DAY.

With grateful joy, O Lord, we hail this blessed day. We thank thee with our whole hearts that he who died for our sins has risen again for our justification. We bless thee that Jesus Christ our Lord, who was made of the seed of David according to the flesh, has been declared to be the Son of God with power by the resurrection of the dead. We adore thee that Jesus, thy beloved Son, is not sleeping in the tomb, but has risen as he said, and that he has thus become the first-fruits of them that slept.

Lord, strengthen our faith in the assurance that as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. We pray thee most earnestly, O heavenly Father, to bring all our hearts more and more under the power of thy revelation, since the hour is coming in which all that are in their graves shall hear the voice of the Son of God and come forth; they that have done good unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of damnation. Awaken in each one of us a living faith in Jesus Christ, that we may in that hour hear joyfully the voice that will break the sleep of death.

We beseech thee, O God, to assist us by that mighty power which wrought in him when thou didst raise him from the dead, that we may be quickened together with Christ unto newness of life, and sit together with him in heavenly places. May we henceforth have our affections raised above the things of this world, and fixed on those things which are above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God.

While we are here upon earth, may the remembrance of our risen and exalted Saviour stimulate us to all holy obedience and love. May we have our treasure and our conversation in heaven, amid all the sorrows and trials of this mortal life. Give us grace to live as the children of God and as heirs of eternal glory. As children of the light may we ever walk in the light of thy countenance reconciled in Jesus Christ. May we shun all evil, and show forth thy praise in acts of obedience to thee and of benevolence to our fellow-men. May we ever be on the alert for opportunities to do good. May we be anxious and skillful to do good to all classes of men, and especially to such as are of the household of faith. May we thus let our light so shine before men that they may glorify our Father in heaven. May we indeed so adorn the doctrine of God, our Saviour, that men may take knowledge of us that we have been with him, and have learned to be his true followers. Let similar grace be manifested to all members of thy Church upon the earth, and may all ministers and teachers of thy word be inspired with wisdom from above, that by united and faithful effort they may hasten the spread of the Gospel till all men shall know thee from the least to the greatest.

We pray that when the Lord Jesus Christ himself shall come again, with all his holy angels, to judge the world, we may meet him with joy, and receive his commendation, "Well done, good and faithful servant; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." These, and all needful things, we ask, O God, in the name of our adorable Saviour, Jesus Christ. Amen.

THANKSGIVING DAY.

Morning Prayer.

Infinite source of all blessings, with grateful adoration we acknowledge thee to be our Creator and our God. How infinite are thy mercies to the children of men! How great is the sum of them! O that men would praise thee for thy goodness, thy loving-kindness, and thy compassion! We thank thee that in thy good and gracious providence we are permitted to live in a land where the Gospel is preached, where the Holy Bible is read, and where Christianity has brought forth glorious fruits. Not least of these is the national recognition of thine honor and majesty, thy power and glory, thy goodness and thy grace, in which it is our privilege this day humbly to join.

We bless thee for those wonderful dealings with our fathers in years gone by, through which they were led publicly to acknowledge and praise thee, and to set apart days for the special commemoration of thy goodness. We are thankful that in the progress of years and in the midst of national growth and expansion this goodly custom has not been forgotten, but has been extended and made national. We bless thee that from year to year thou dost put it in the hearts of our rulers to recognize and proclaim thy goodness, and to call upon the people to assemble themselves together for the consideration of thy manifested love and for the worship of their Creator and Benefactor.

As a family we gladly respond to this call, and

here at our domestic altar we gratefully offer up our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving.

[*Special family blessings recounted.*]

Specially, O God, do we thank thee that we are enabled to receive these thine unnumbered blessings not only as so many tokens of thy love, but as helps to preparation for a higher and better life, to which we are hastening. We praise thee, that though we dwell in a land of death we are cheered with precious hopes of immortality and eternal life beyond the grave. We adore thee for that greatest of all blessings, the gift of thy dear Son our Saviour, through whom we are offered redemption from the power and consequences of sin and an inheritance among them that are sanctified. We desire to accept the great salvation he came on earth to purchase for us with sincere hearts, and to make the obedience of our lives to his commandments the proof of our undying love to him who died for us.

Prepare us now, O Lord, to wait upon thee in thy sanctuary, and throughout all this day and throughout our future lives to show forth our gratitude to thee by works of devotion to thy service and of kindness to one another and to our fellow-beings. And to the great name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost shall be thanksgiving and praise, as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

Evening Prayer.

At the close of a day specially set apart for the commemoration of the divine goodness, it becomes us to make mention of the loving-kindness of our God. We therefore call upon our souls and all that is within us, to laud and magnify the ever glorious name of our Creator and Preserver. When we look back upon our lives we behold that goodness and mercy have followed us all our days. Every hour has been filled with mercies, and every year crowned with blessings innumerable. In addition to our individual and social benefits, we would not be unmindful of the blessings we enjoy as inhabitants of a great and favored nation. When we look abroad upon the earth and behold the tyrannies, the oppressions, and the miseries that prevail in vast portions of the world ; and especially when we look back and remember the strifes, the bloodshed and the wars, the persecution, the famines and the plagues with which nations have been desolated and humanity made to suffer, we cannot be sufficiently thankful for the national blessings we are permitted to share.

We sincerely praise thee for peace and quietness, for protection in our lawful pursuits, for the enjoyment of civil and religious liberty, for general intelligence, for schools, and for the prevailing respect to law and justice. We thank thee, O God, that in the midst of these great benefits thou hast also been pleased to bestow upon us bountiful provisions for our temporal good. By thy favor the hand of industry has been permitted to gather sup-

plies for human comfort from the face of the earth, from the waters, from the forest, from the mine, and from distant climes. Plenteous harvests have crowned the labors of the year, and general healthfulness prevails to enable us to enjoy thy bounty. What shall we render to thee, O Lord, for all thy benefits? We will take the cup of thanksgiving and call upon thy name.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost. We praise thee, O God. We acknowledge thee to be the Lord. Let all the earth worship thee the Father everlasting. Heaven and earth are full of the majesty of thy glory.

We give thee thanks for home and friends, for mercies and privileges, for knowledge and freedom, for the favors of thy providence upon our land, and for the tokens of good thou hast shown thy Church.

In all thy works and ways help us to see thy hand, and in tracing the laws of thy creation may we never lose sight of thee the Lawgiver.

We entreat thee, O Lord, to continue to confer upon us all spiritual blessings in Jesus Christ, and to impart to us all those providential blessings which shall be for our spiritual good.

May we as a family appreciate all thy goodness to us, and may it please thee to continue to us thy merciful favors while we linger in the land of the living.

[Children—Relatives—Friends—Neighbors.]

Dwell by thy good Spirit in our homes, and in the homes of all for whom we should pray, through Christ our Lord. Amen.

CHRISTMAS DAY.

O God, our heavenly Father, we bless thy name that thou hast prolonged our lives to see the return of this holy and joyous festival, and once more to unite with thy people in commemorating the manifestation of thy son in human nature. Glory be to thee, that thou hast so loved the world as to give thy only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. The promise which thou didst make in the earliest ages, and which thou wast pleased from time to time to renew by thy servants the Prophets, thou hast in thy faithfulness and mercy fulfilled. According to thy word, to us a Child is born ; to us a Son is given ; and with him thou hast promised freely to give us all things. Thou hast sent thine angels to proclaim peace upon earth, and good-will to men ; and for this proof of thy love we would with our every breath give glory to God in the highest.

Give us grace that we may receive the gift of thine incarnate Son with gratitude and faith. May the blessed design of his appearing be answered in our present and everlasting salvation. Thou hast sent him to be a light unto the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel ; and hast declared that they who follow him shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life. May he shine upon our darkened minds, discovering to us the things which belong unto our peace, and teaching us to do thy will. Grant us full knowledge of his doctrine, and a solemn conviction of its truth ; that our faith may be strong

and unwavering, and our conduct blameless before thee.

O God, thou hast sent thy Son into the world to seek and to save that which was lost. He was made of a woman, made under the law, that he might redeem them that were under the law, and that we might receive the adoption of sons. Vouchsafe to us that adoption. Deliver us from the curse of thy holy and righteous law, and acknowledge us as thine own sons and daughters.

O Lord, when thou didst bring the First-begotten into the world, thou didst command all the angels of God to worship him. We also would render to him the glory due unto his name. Thou art the King of glory, O Christ; thou art the everlasting Son of the Father. Help us to submit to thy government; to put our neck under thy light and easy yoke; and to spend all the days of our lives in willing subjection unto thee. Take the entire possession of our heart; set up thy kingdom within us; and help us so to live, that when thou shalt come to raise the dead, and to judge the world, we may stand approved before thee.

Hear our prayers for the poor and destitute, especially at the present season. Stir up the minds of the people to devise liberal things; and let the poor, the aged, the fatherless, and the widow, for whom nothing is provided, eat and be satisfied, that their hearts also may bless thee for thy bountiful goodness.

Hear these our supplications, O Lord, for the sake of Jesus Christ our Mediator and Redeemer.

“Our Father which art in heaven,” etc.

COMMUNION SUNDAY.

Almighty God, our heavenly Father, we praise thee for thy love in sending thy Son to be the Saviour of the world. We acknowledge him to be the propitiation for our sins, and in his name we now draw near to thee. For his sake, pardon, we beseech thee, all our offenses, and send the Holy Spirit to be our Comforter. Assure us of thy favor, and always keep us in thy love. Be our defender in the hour of temptation; keep us from falling; and establish us in strength to do thy will.

Bless to us, we beseech thee, all the means of grace; and especially bless to such of us as shall attend upon it, that holy sacrament which our Lord commanded us to partake of, and by which his death is to be shown forth in his Church, even till his coming again.

Help us to examine our hearts. Give us a true repentance for all our sins, and a strong conviction of our unworthiness; also an unshaken confidence in thy love, and a firm faith in the sacrifice of Christ, by which alone our sin can be put away. Inspire us with an unconquerable hatred to sin, and with fervent charity toward all, especially such as are of the household of faith. And when we approach the table to which we are invited by the mercy that is boundless and everlasting, give us clear and enlarged views of the power and willingness of the Lord Jesus Christ to save all that come to him. There may we behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sins of the world, and feel that he has taken

away our sins. Instruct and help us with reverence again to enter into secret covenant with the Captain of our salvation ; that, having fought the good fight of faith, we may lay hold on eternal life.

Mercifully give us with the seal of thy covenant the assurance of thy love. Enable us to feed upon Christ in our heart by faith with thanksgiving. When we receive the outward and visible sign, O give us also the inward and spiritual grace. Henceforth may Christ dwell in our hearts by faith ; that, being rooted and grounded in love, we may be filled with all the fruits of righteousness.

Let it please thee to pour thy blessing on all who shall this day minister thy word. On all listening congregations bestow the demonstration of thy Spirit and power ; that thy gracious purposes may be accomplished in the salvation of sinners, and the edification of all thy people. Let thy word grow and prevail mightily. Open to thy servants doors of utterance in every nation, and may all people learn to glorify thee. May those who now reject the Saviour come to the knowledge of thy truth, and become faithful witnesses of its power to redeem them from all iniquity.

And now, O Lord, cause thy blessing to rest upon us, and all the subjects of our prayers, and may we at last be permitted to spend an eternal Sabbath in thy heavenly kingdom, through Jesus Christ our Saviour.

“Our Father which art in heaven,” etc.

FOR A FAST-DAY.

O Lord God most holy, Maker and Judge of all mankind, wherewith shall we come before thee, or how shall we lift up our eyes to thy throne, thou high and lofty One, that inhabitest eternity? We confess our sins before thee. Lord, have mercy upon us : Christ, have mercy upon us. We have nothing whereof to speak but our own sinfulness and misery, and thine abundant mercy in Christ our Saviour. For thy name's sake, O Lord, pardon our iniquity, for it is great. Heal our backslidings. Restore unto us the joy of thy salvation, and make us glad with the light of thy countenance. We believe that though we have sinned, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, and that he is the propitiation for our sins. O, may the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, cleanse our conscience from dead works to serve the living God.

We humble ourselves under thy mighty hand ; we earnestly repent, and are heartily sorry for all our misdoings ; but we flee to thee for mercy. O Lord, have mercy upon us. Pardon our sins, create in us a clean heart, and renew a right spirit within us. O that our ways were directed to keep thy statutes ! We beseech thee to write thy laws in our heart. Thy commandments are not grievous, but our hearts are sinful. O sprinkle clean water on us that we may be clean. Deliver us, we beseech thee, from the hands of our enemies, that we may serve thee without

fear, in righteousness and holiness before thee, all the days of our life.

We would earnestly plead with thee on behalf of our country. We are a sinful nation ; a people laden with iniquity. We know thy truth, and have been instructed out of thy law, yet have we in works denied thee. By multitudes thy day is profaned, thy name is blasphemed, thy worship is despised, and thy laws are broken and rejected. Yet, O Lord, be not wroth very sore. Remember not our offenses. Visit us not with thy judgements against us, and withhold not thy blessings from this nation.

O Lord, revive thy work. Bless all Christian Churches and people ; and especially all whom thou hast called to preach thy Gospel. May the remembrance of thy goodness humble us all before thee ; and strengthen us to look for thy mercy, and receive the abundant outpourings of thy grace, that pure and undefiled religion may flourish throughout the land. There are many who err from the truth ; O, quicken the zeal of thy people, that with holy compassion they may care for the souls of others. And render effectual the means which they employ to convert sinners from the error of their way, so that multitudes of people may be added unto the Lord.

Be with us through this day. Remember us in our various circumstances and save us from forgetting thee. Do thou, O our God, supply all our need, according to thy riches in glory through Jesus Christ our Lord.

“Our Father which art in heaven,” etc.

FOR A TIME OF TRIAL.

Most holy and ever-blessed God, Father of mercies, and God of all consolation. Thou, O Lord, searchest the heart. Thou art a God of knowledge, and by thee actions are weighed. We would not incur the condemnation of drawing near to thee with our mouth, and honoring thee with our lips, while our hearts are far from thee. Most mercifully assist us in our present prayers and supplications. Help us to ask according to thy will, and may we have the petitions that we desire of thee.

O God, we humble ourselves under thy mighty hand. Enter not into judgment with us. Spare us, good Lord, spare thy people, whom thou hast created by thy goodness, preserved by thy bounty, and redeemed by the precious blood of the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world.

Thou hast commanded us in thy holy word to call upon thee in the day of trouble. O God, thou knowest our present circumstances; thou knowest the sorrows of our hearts, the afflictions which we feel, and the troubles which we endure. We thank thee that we yet live, and that we may hope in thy salvation. We bless thee that we know that whom thou lovest, thou chastenest; and that this is not for thy pleasure, but for our profit, that we may be partakers of thy holiness. We are in thy hand, and all we have is thine. Teach us to see and to acknowledge thy hand, and in all things to submit to thy will. Whether thou givest or takest away, we desire grace to say without reserve, Blessed be the name of

the Lord : and whatsoever be the issue of the present trial, may we never sin against thee with our lips, nor charge thee foolishly.

We acknowledge thine almighty power. Thou doest all things well. O God, undertake for us. Be merciful unto us ; for our soul trusteth in thee, and in the shadow of thy wing will we make our refuge till these calamities be overpast. While we are passing through the waters, be thou with us ; and through the rivers, let them not overflow us. Now that we are walking through the fire, let us not be burned, neither let the flame kindle upon us. Let thy manifested presence cheer us, and let thy right hand uphold us. In the hour of temptation, be thou near to succor and to save ; and should our troubles increase, may the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, keep our hearts and minds in Christ Jesus, that every disposition, temper, and thought may be preserved in obedience to thy will. We seek thy promised guidance, and thy guardian care, to lead us in the good and the right way ; and as thou hast caused us to put our trust in thee, O let us not be confounded.

Be with us through our mortal life. We know not what will befall us, but we commit ourselves to thee. Put not away thy servants in anger. Thou hast been our help in past troubles ; leave us not, neither forsake us, O God of our salvation, but, in thy wisdom and love, help and deliver us, for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord.

“Our Father which art in heaven,” etc.

FOR A TIME OF SICKNESS.

O Thou who art the Father of the spirits of all flesh ; who hast created us by thy power, and redeemed us by the death of thy Son ; enable us with deep humility to approach thy throne. "

At this time especially we would remember our sins, and confess them before thee, now that thou hast permitted affliction to enter our dwelling. Our forgetful hearts are reminded that sin and death are in the world, and that we belong to a sinful race. In the time of trouble we would remember thy mercy. God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself. We have an Advocate with the Father, and he is the propitiation for our sins.

Enable us, O God, to see thy hand in the present afflictive dispensation, and not only to submit to it with all our heart, but to obtain from it that spiritual good for which it pleased thee to send it. Is there any thing in us that is hateful to thee, and on account of which this chastening is come upon us ? O, shine into our heart, and enable us to amend our ways, and to turn again unto the Lord. Let it soon appear that thou hast afflicted us for our good, and that this trial proceeds from thy fatherly mercy.

We earnestly commend to thee the afflicted member of our family. If it be thy gracious will, abate the disease, and bless the means which are employed for the recovery of health. Thou, Lord, bringest down, and thou raisest up again. Thou killest, and thou makest alive. We acknowledge not only thine almighty power, but thy rightful sovereignty. It is

not for us to say, What doest thou? Lord, thy will be done. Nevertheless, as thou not only permittest, but commandest, us to make our requests known unto thee, we beseech thee now to hear us. If it please thee, let the affliction be removed. But while it continues, let it be abundantly sanctified, and may *he* who is afflicted be divinely supported. Bring to *his* mind such thoughts as are proper for *his* present circumstances; and though thou afflictest the body, we beseech thee to comfort and save the soul. Prepare *him* for all that thou hast appointed. Give *him* unfailing patience. May *his* heart trust in thee; and in the midst of *his* present weakness, help *him* to pour out *his* soul before thee, and so to commune with *his* own heart, that *he* may be made more largely a partaker of thy holiness according to thy will.

O God, our heavenly Father, we look to thee for succor in this time of trouble, and on thy faithfulness and love we desire to rely. We plead the merits of thy Son, our Saviour. For his sake we beseech thee to hear us, and in thy wisdom and mercy answer us. In the midst of our sorrow, grant us the peace of God, joy in the Holy Ghost, and good hope through grace; that though we suffer now, we may be enabled to suffer according to thy will, and be brought finally to that country where the inhabitant shall never say, I am sick. Hear us, O Lord our God, have compassion on us and help us, for the sake of Jesus Christ our Saviour and Redeemer.

"Our Father which art in heaven," etc.

ON THE DEATH OF A RELATIVE.

O Lord God of Hosts, who art the refuge and strength of thy people, and a very present help in trouble ; to whom can we go, in the time of our sorrow and distress, but unto thee, whose providence ordereth all things both in heaven and in earth ? In thy sovereign pleasure thou hast called away from us one of our family. A dearly beloved relative is removed from us by death. In the depth of our affliction we hasten to thy footstool ; not to complain of thy dealings with us, but to implore the help of thy grace under the pressure of our grief, and to pray that thou wouldest teach us to profit by this painful dispensation. Thou showest us again that there is no discharge for any in this war, but that it is appointed unto men once to die. We acknowledge that we are dust, and that unto dust we shall return. We beseech thee to subdue our passions, and destroy our selfishness. Give us not only a conviction of thine undoubted right to dispose of thy creatures according to thy will, but of thy perfect wisdom and unfailing goodness ; that from our inmost soul we may say, good is the will of the Lord concerning us.

Blessed Lord, give us to see the uncertainty of all earthly comforts, and save us from counting on their continuance. O, bring us to see that thou alone art the joy of our soul ; that thou alone canst give perpetual comfort, and peace, and gladness. O, help us in this hour, that with entire sincerity, and without reserve, we may claim thee to be the Lord our God. Help us to submit ourselves to thine authority, to

acquiesce in all thine appointments, and to abide with confidence in thee, whose loving kindness can fully satisfy our soul both in time and eternity. We come to thee in the name of Christ our Saviour. We plead the merit of his death. O, let his blood be sprinkled on our conscience, and thy pardoning love shed abroad in our heart.

In thy mercy help us, that we may hear thy voice. Fix on our heart the solemn admonition of thy providence, and write there the lessons of thy word. We beseech thee to pardon us. And let this bereavement be sanctified to the increasing spirituality of our affections. Thy providence, no less than thy word, has said to us, Be ye also ready; for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh. Stir us up to watchfulness and prayer; that henceforward we may give all diligence to make our calling and election sure. Make us steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord; and directing all our labor, and all our faith, to this end, that whether present in the body, or absent from it, we may be accepted of thee. O God, prepare us for our last hour, that when thou shalt be pleased to call us hence, we may be fully ready for an exchange of worlds, and for an entrance into the rest that remaineth for the people of God.

Keep our heart in thy fear, establish our goings, and bring us to thine everlasting kingdom, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

“Our Father which art in heaven,” etc.

ON THE COMMENCEMENT OF A NEW MINISTER'S
LABORS.

Great Head of the Church, it is of thine infinite condescension that human beings are permitted to be co-workers with thee for the establishment of thy kingdom upon the earth, for thou hast made man an agent in the great work of saving his fellow-men. We thank thee that, though men change and die, thou dost by thy grace keep up a perpetual succession of witnesses for the truth, and that thus thy glorious Gospel is to be proclaimed to the end of time.

Inasmuch as thou hast made it the privilege and the duty of Christian Churches and people to pray for those who minister to them in sacred things, and who are appointed to teach and guide them in the way of life, we commend to thy special favor and benediction our recently-appointed pastor. May the dews of thy heavenly grace rest upon him day by day. May he love thy word and see thine image there. May he be enabled to set forth thy truth with fidelity and power. May he, by a godly walk and a pure conversation, be enabled to win many precious souls to Christ. May he have zeal to labor in the face of discouragements, wisdom to guide him in all difficulties, and divine strength to support him in every trial. Enable him to be diligent in visiting the sick, faithful in warning the impenitent, and successful in building up thy Church on its holy foundation, even the rock Christ Jesus. Give him great access to the hearts and consciences of the people, and may he be enabled to communicate to every one a portion of truth in

due season. May he be strongly supported by the zeal, the sympathy, and the co-operation of all Christian people; and may he and they work together as true yoke-fellows in the kingdom and patience of Jesus; and may the results of their united labors be constantly promotive of the salvation of men, and of the glory of God. Thus shall the praise be thine for ever and ever. Amen.

FOR MORE LABORERS IN THE LORD'S VINEYARD.

Divine Saviour, thou hast commanded us to pray the Lord of the harvest that he would send forth more laborers into his harvest. O Lord, the work of rescuing this world from the power and consequences of sin is thine, and although thou dost permit us to be co-workers with thee, yet it is ever thine office to call laborers into the ministry of thy Church.

Be pleased, therefore, to send forth thy Holy Spirit not only to convince the unawakened, but also to impress upon the hearts of the truly converted a clear sense of their personal duties. Upon the youth of our Sunday-schools, and upon the young men of our Churches, send the clear light of truth. Impress upon them all a deep sense of the moral wants and miseries of the world. Let them also clearly perceive the power and adaptation of the glorious Gospel of the blessed God to relieve those miseries and to heal the maladies of the soul. Beget in each one an ardent desire to do what he can to save the perishing and to aid and strengthen thy Church in her

mission of love to a lost world. Lead each one in the pathway of individual duty. Incline all to covet earnestly the best gifts, and to use faithfully all their talents to promote the glory of God.

While the heathen are perishing through ignorance of thy law, and while idolatry maintains its dark sway over millions of our fellow-men, incline the hearts of many to go forth and proclaim to them the unsearchable riches of Christ.

Among the converted heathen of various nations also raise up and qualify evangelists in great numbers to preach the Gospel to their own countrymen. While even in Christian lands many are dead in trespasses and sins, and many wander into ways of transgression and ruin, be pleased to raise up faithful men who, being thoroughly taught in thy word and will, shall be able to teach others also. For all thy Churches provide able ministers of the New Testament who as workmen that need not to be ashamed shall rightly divide the word of truth. For every branch of thy flock supply true and zealous pastors, who, following the great Shepherd and Bishop of their souls, shall go out and in before thy people with blameless lives and godly example, leading them to fountains of living waters. Thus, O Lord, may thy Churches be made strong to do thy will, and the talents which thou hast given to thy servants be consecrated to thy service and employed to do thy perfect and holy will.

And to the great name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost be all honor and praise for evermore. Amen.

INDEX.

- Adaptation in prayers, 140, 168.
- Adoration, 54.
- Adults, morning and evening prayers for, 224.
- Advantages of social prayer, 130.
- Aid, divine, needed, 169.
- Alexander, J. W., quoted, 96, 106.
- Answers to prayer, 138.
- Apostolic prayers, 151.
- Arguments from Scripture, 59.
- Arising, 77.
- Arrangement in public prayer, 163.
- Benedictions, the divine, 180.
- Blessings to be secured by prayer, 181.
- Business, mottoes for, 75.
- Children should be taught to pray, 85, 133.
- Children, prayers for, 199.
- Christian graces auxiliary to prayer, 84.
- Christmas Day, prayer for, 382.
- Class-meetings, 133.
- Closet, the place of secret prayer, 66.
- Closet prayer of a minister, 254.
- Comfort of the Holy Ghost, 186.
- Communion Sunday, prayer for, 384.
- Confession, 56.
- Conversation, 78.
- Conditions of public prayer, 146.
- Death of a relative, 392.
- Danger, 79.
- Defective views of public prayer, 146.
- Devotional reading, 74.
- Difficulties, 78.
- Earnest of the Spirit, 191.
- Easter day, prayer for, 376.
- Elements of prayer, 52, 89.
- Ejaculatory prayer, 75, 81.
- Encouragements to prayer, 45.
- Evening prayer, 70.
- Family, the, divinely appointed, 93.
- Fast-day, prayer for, 386.
- Faults of public prayer, 166.
- Food for the soul, 184.
- Forms of prayer, the uses of, 121.
 - private prayer, 199-258.
 - prayer for families, 260-367.
- Fruits of the Spirit, 189.
- Growth in grace, 223.
- Habit of devotional singing, 83.
- Habit of learning and reciting Scripture, 75, 114.
- Habits of prayer, 68, 75, 178.
 - adaptation in prayer, 168.
- Hamilton, James, quoted, 17, 24, 38.
- Hearing the Gospel, 80.
- Help, divine, in the sanctuary, 180.
- Hinderances to prayer, 37.
- Humility, 220.

- Idea of prayer, 13.
 Invocation, 53.
- Laborers in the Lord's vineyard, 394. *
- Language adapted to public prayer, 162.
- Leaders of worship, 139, 148.
- Life, spiritual, 184.
- Lord's Prayer, the, 86, 95, 122, 147.
- Love, the, of God, 219.
- Meditation, 72.
- Meekness, 221.
- Memorization of Scripture, 75.
- Mental prayer, 75.
- More, Hannah, quoted, 14, 18, 86.
- Morning and evening prayers for children and youth, 203-217.
- Morning prayer, 69, 77.
- Mothers should teach children to pray, 86.
- Minister's closet prayer, 254.
- Minister's labors, commencement of, 394.
- New birth, the, 181.
- New Year's Day, prayers for, 372-375.
- Night-watches, prayer in, 81.
- Noonday prayer, 70.
- Obligation of prayer universal, 27.
- Obligation of social worship, 134.
- Obligations of parents, 99.
- Occasions of prayer, 63.
- Parental obligation, 99.
- Participation in social and public prayer, 134, 144, 178.
- Particular occasions, prayers for, 372.
- Parts of prayer, 52, 89.
- Personal interest in public worship, 179.
- Petition, 57.
- Phelps, quoted, 39.
- Power of prayer, 48.
- Praise, 62.
- Prayer a divine appointment, 19.
 a duty, 20.
 a gift, 30.
 an instinct, 18.
 a privilege, 21.
 a telegraph, 82.
- Prayer-meeting of the Pentecost, 135.
- Prayer-meetings, 71, 133, 135.
- Prayers for adults, 224.
- Prayers for children, 199.
 families, 260.
 youth, 203.
- Prayers of Paul, 154.
- Preparation for prayer, 72, 137, 175.
- Private prayer, 65, 199.
- Promises, 59.
- Public worship, 142.
- Questions for self-examination, 218.
- Reading the Scriptures, 79, 112.
- Recitations of Scripture, 114.
- Relative, death of a, 392.
- Resignation to God's will, 221.
- Responsibility of heads of families, 96.
- Responsibility of worshipers, 27.
- Retiring, 81.
- Right views of prayer, 13.
- Scripture to be memorized, 91.
- Scriptural warrant for social worship, 126.

- Seasons for prayer, 67.
 Self-cultivation, 120, 158.
 Self-dedication, prayer of, 252.
 Self-denial, 22.
 Self-examination, 72, 90.
 Sickness, prayer in, 390.
 Singing in devotion, 83, 118.
 Source, the, of help, 169.
 Spirit, the, of prayer, 179.
 Spiritual food, 184.
 Study of the subject of prayer, 149.
 Supplication, 59.
 Sympathy in social prayer, 140.
 Telegraph, the, an illustration of
 prayer, 82.
 Temptation, 79.
 Thankfulness, 222.
 Thanksgiving, 62.
 Thanksgiving Day, prayer for, 378.
 Thompson, quoted, 17.
 Time to be allotted, 67, 111.
 Topics of family prayer, 115.
 Treffry, quoted, 16.
 Trial, time of prayer for, 387.
 Tyler, quoted, 45.
 Variety demanded in public pray-
 er, 163.
 Variety of subjects in family
 prayer, 115.
 Watts, quoted, 16.
 Wesley's forms of prayer, 203-287.
 Witness of the Spirit, 189.
 Youth the time to form habits of
 prayer, 85.

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215

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